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Childhood Education

What Does Crowding Do?

What are the needs of children?

Anecdotal accounts

April 1954

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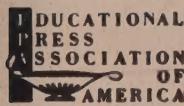
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Childhood Education

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Photo by Eva Luoma

How present problems of place and space are solved will affect the lives of children.

What Are the Greatest Needs of Children?

THIS QUESTION WAS SENT TO ACE BRANCHES AND TO INTERNATIONAL members of ACEI in the spring of 1952. The problem of crowding in schools—too many children per room and too little space per child both indoors and outdoors—was included in most of the answers received.

Research bulletins, books, and educational magazines were studied. Inquiries were sent to many sources such as the U. S. Office of Education, Research Division of the National Education Association, National Association for Nursery Education, and to individuals in the field of education to discover recent research concerning recommended size of class and space children need in school and on the playground. All replies brought the same answer—no genuine research on this problem available. Most standards for class size and for space per child are simply expert opinion based on experience.

Agreement was expressed on the following statements that now appear as Area II in the *ACEI 1953-55 Plan of Action*.

II. Place and space either foster or retard the normal development of children.

A. Children need school buildings that permit:

Each child from nursery school, kindergarten, through elementary school, to have a full school day.

Groups small enough for satisfying individual and group experiences.

Recommended maximum group per teacher and per room:

Nursery school (teacher and assistant)	15 children	Primary	25 children
Kindergarten	20 children	Intermediate	25 children

Space enough for good school living indoors varies in relation to many factors in each situation. "Experience or service" research in this area is lacking. Many suggest that the minimum should be:

Per nursery school child	50 sq. ft.	Per primary child	40 sq. ft.
Per kindergarten child	40 sq. ft.	Per intermediate child	40 sq. ft.

B. Children need playgrounds that are accessible, large enough, interesting and safe.

Space needs should be estimated in terms of children's activities. "Experience or service" research in this area is lacking. Many suggest that the minimum should be:

Per young child	75-100 sq. ft.	For an elementary school, a minimum of 5 acres, plus an additional acre for every 100 pupils.
Per older child	75-100 sq. ft.	

What is happening to the children in crowded conditions? Is available space being used to best advantage? What research is now in process? These are some of the questions to which branch and international members of ACEI are seeking answers.

How the present problems of place and space are solved will affect the lives of children.—MAMIE W. HEINZ, *associate secretary, ACEI*.

Our Crowded Schools

--Today and Yesterday

"One child in every three in city elementary schools is in a class so large it is impossible for him to get a fair amount of his teacher's time . . . One third of all city elementary school children are in classes containing thirty-six pupils or more . . . One child in every eleven is in a class that has forty-one or more pupils."—From a survey made by NEA Research Division, 1953.

LESS THAN A CENTURY AND A HALF SEPARATE these radically different attitudes toward education. To move in so brief a time from admiration of a system that made it possible for one teacher to manage a thousand children to disturbance over the existence of classes of 40—this is indeed suggestive of revolutionary changes in the interpretation of education. Such changes have taken place, changes that make it difficult for us to understand the enthusiasm with which the monitorial systems of Lancaster and Bell gained the hold they had, both in England where they originated and in the United States. But the problem for which the monitorial system seemed the solution in the early nineteenth century is with us still, acutely so today—*too little space and too few teachers for the children to be taught.*

Needs—Yesterday and Today

The situations giving rise to the problem, today and yesterday, differ as do the attitudes toward it. In the early nine-

" . . . when I behold the extraordinary union of celerity in instruction and economy of expense—and when I perceive one great assembly of a thousand children under the eye of a single teacher, marching with unexampled rapidity and with perfect discipline to the goal of knowledge, I confess that I recognize in Lancaster the benefactor of the human race . . . "—GOVERNOR DEWITT CLINTON in 1809 quoted in CUBBERLEY'S *Public Education in the United States.*

teenth century the critical shortage of schools was due to several causes. The Industrial Revolution brought crowding of children in city slums. The humanitarian impulses of philanthropists were directed toward giving these children a chance at education. And there was a demand for education growing out of the consciousness that the new democratic spirit depended for its survival on the intelligence of the people. The causes of the present inability to provide sufficient housing and teachers to meet the needs of children are possibly more complicated: unprecedented increase in birth rate; mounting costs of living; draining of material resources into defense; difficulty of recruiting young people into the profession.

Two Different Concepts

The solutions proposed for solving the problem reflect the fundamental differences of the two centuries in their concept of the function of elementary education. Enthusiasm over the Lancasterian system was natural in a generation which regarded the three R's as the total content

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of the curriculum and regimented discipline as a sure sign that character and morals were being developed.

Since so many children could be handled by one teacher, large halls took the place of school buildings. Because the system was so definitely developed, older children, monitors, could be trained to teach while the single teacher in the big hall could keep an eye over all.

Lancaster's manuals were so explicit that practically every detail leading to efficiency and economy of management could be easily mastered. The problem, for example, of caring for so many children's hats was met by tying the hats around the children's necks so that at a prescribed signal all the hats would come on or off in perfect unison.

And above all it was cheap. It cost New York City for the year 1882 just \$1.22 to educate a child in the new method! But in spite of all its virtues and its rapid spread throughout the East and Middle West of our country during the first three decades of the century, its fallacies soon became evident in practice and by the middle of the century it had about seen its day.

We today, unwilling to give up our hard-earned gains of this century, appropriately called "The Century of the Child," stubbornly struggle for more schools and more teachers as the obvious solution to the problem.

In the meantime, since neither seems to be forthcoming rapidly enough to keep up with the demands, we are resorting to double and sometimes triple sessions with children filing in and out of buildings from early morning to late afternoon. We are giving up special rooms and auditoriums and the activities for which they were used to provide space for regular classes. The teacher shortage is being met by the issuance of emergency certificates to many unqualified teachers.

We know that these are not solutions; they are stopgaps. We ask anxiously, where are they leading us? What will be the effect a decade from now on our whole social structure as this generation of children becomes adult—a generation with fewer hours of school, a curriculum rapidly losing its enriching elements, a depleted teaching staff of decreasing professional preparation? We ask ourselves, in particular, how much the individual attention given to a child by a teacher with little understanding of the principles of human growth and their application is really worth?

We Can Learn from Lancaster

Certainly we do not want to drift back to the regimentation of the Lancasterian system. But there are symptoms that we might be doing so as heard in the remark of a principal of a big city school that he felt like a train dispatcher with his main concern the schedule for moving lines of children in and out of classrooms. There may, however, be something that we can learn from the promoters of the Lancasterian system, not so much from the system itself, as from the spirit of realism with which its proponents attacked their problem: They wanted what they believed was good for children, and their zeal won out. It is generally assumed today that our public school system got under way as soon as it did because of the consciousness roused for the necessity of public education by those who promoted the Lancasterian system. It would seem reasonable to assume that an approach equally realistic and zealous for what we believe to be good education for children may in our day have as far reaching and fundamental results as the realism and zeal of those who brought about reforms through the Lancasterian system.

We have so much more knowledge to

bring to bear on our problem than Lancaster and Bell and their followers had to bring on theirs. All the sciences have contributed to our deeper understanding of man and the universe, and we have made truly rapid strides in seeing the implications of these data for the education of children. Our goals, too, have become increasingly clearer, and our respect for children as persons has increased commensurately. None of this can we afford to lose. There must be no compromise with our ideals. The solution does not lie in change of goals nor principles. It lies, rather, in a fresh, unbiased examination of our methods.

Problem Is Space and Time

Yes, we need more schools and more teachers and need to work increasingly to get them. But mere assertion of their need, or even mere determination to get them, is not enough. It is our method of attacking the problem that possibly is in error.

Baring the problem down to the bone, it becomes one fundamentally of space and time. These are universals. Efficiency in their use spells in large measure the success of an individual or an enterprise. These are the elements that Lancaster attempted to deal with. His answer to space was the large hall that would accommodate many children; his answer to the time problem was its distribution by one teacher among many monitors. While the years pass that it will of necessity take to build enough schools and educate enough teachers, it is possible in the light of our ideals of education that through a better use of the time and space we have, we may bring our educational practices more in line with our ideals.

Certainly we will not return to herding children in vast halls. But perhaps our attitude toward the dominance of the

school building as the seat of education needs modification. We are already using the resources of the community in our trips to supplement the work done in the school building. Perhaps we need to think of such resources not merely as adjuncts but more in the way Floyd Dell, about forty years ago, envisioned the school as actually the community itself. He described such education in the final chapter of his book, *Were You Ever a Child?*—the chapter he optimistically entitled “Education in 1948.” In it, a visitor to a town asks to see the school building and is shown instead children at work in the town library, the museum, the bakery, the town hall. We certainly would not go so far as to eliminate the school building, but might not the direct education obtained at its sources be better for children than attempts to confine it to the train dispatching process of shifting children in and out of school buildings for the rudiments of education?

Comparably the teacher's time might be shared not with drillmaster monitors but with all manner of people in the community, the postal clerk, the policeman, the artist, the baker, the lawyer, the seamstress. The teacher would serve as the coordinator of all the human resources of the community he could muster.

Perhaps if a beginning were made along such lines as these in the years that it will take to build all the schools needed and educate all the teachers needed to place one in each present standardized classroom, we would before it is too late make the fundamental changes in school structure and in the education of teachers needed for this changing world. Perhaps, too, our efforts to meet our problems realistically and without compromising our ideals may bring about more rapid progress than today we can visualize.

ROOM TO LIVE AND LEARN

Class size and room space as factors in the learning-teaching process

What does research say about class size and space? What questions should we be asking? How shall we go about finding the answers? Should every teacher have a small class load?

THE CHILD WHO SAID, AFTER HIS FIRST morning in kindergarten, "I'm going home now; I'll be back when there aren't so many children," used an escape not open to the average teacher plagued with the space and class-size problem. We are concerned with three aspects of it.

- A summary of certain relevant research. With the exception of the summary of studies seeking rather direct answers to the question of desirable room and class size, reference materials are illustrative rather than comprehensive in regard to a given topic.
- An analysis of certain related hypotheses and the questions they pose for parents and educational workers.
- Some possible responsibilities for those concerned with the problem.

The Central Issues

A recent publication for student teachers lists seventeen principles "... in developing and guiding effective group processes in the elementary school." It is suggested that, among other things, the teacher:

- Cultivate a climate in which each child feels that he has a part to play in the activities of the group.
- Start where each child (and the group) is.
- Study continuously the behavioral changes that are taking place within the group.

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- Attempt to keep the subgroups in the classroom relatively small.
- Group children according to their interests, needs, maturity, and age.
- Keep a relatively complete record of the group's original plans and note any changes that are made as the group continues to work together.*

Now, these are excellent statements, worthy of implementation. It is not their author's fault that 45.1 percent of elementary-school teachers in large cities taught classes of more than 35 pupils during the 1952-53 school year (15). Several young people who graduated from our teacher-education program last year are now among the 13.4 percent of teachers in large cities who teach elementary-school classes of more than 40 children. What are they doing now about principles such as these that they came to respect last year? How many of them still will be with us in teaching three years from now?

Some Questions To Be Answered

- How large should a class be?
- How much classroom space should a child have?
- What real differences do these factors make for teaching and learning?

These are important questions for those who would plan school buildings, learn in them, teach in them, send their chil-

* Selected from the principles listed by Robert W. Richey in *The Student Teacher in the Elementary School*, pp. 172-175. John U. Michaelis and Paul R. Grim (Editors). New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953.

dren to them, or pay for them. In the 1953-55 *Plan of Action for Children*, the Association for Childhood Education International recommends maximum group size per teacher and per room to be 15 children with one teacher and an assistant in the nursery school, 20 children in kindergarten, 25 in primary grades, and 25 at the intermediate level. At these last two levels, these figures agree closely with one survey of what elementary-school teachers consider to be ideal class size. The single figure most frequently named was 24, with a spread of 20-29 considered within a desirable range. Classes of 30 or more these teachers classified as large (5).

But even in 1945-46, before many of those children crowding our schools today were born, statistics revealed median class size in large cities (30,000 or more) in excess of this teachers' Utopia. In that year, in cities of 100,000 or more population, median kindergarten and elementary-grade enrollments were 28.7 and 33.8, respectively. In cities of 30,000 to 100,000 these figures were 29.1 and 30.7 (17). By 1952-53, the Utopia had slipped farther over the horizon: 90.1 percent of 3,417,628 elementary-school pupils in 107,015 classrooms of 526 districts surveyed were in classes of more than 25 pupils each; 68.9 percent in classes of more than 30; 33.2 percent in classes of more than 35; 8.8 percent in classes of more than 40, and 1.5 percent in classes of more than 45 (15). As indicated, the statistics for large cities alone were very much worse. And spot checks in 1953-54 show deterioration rather than improvement in these conditions.

The *ACEI Plan of Action* recommends minimum floor space of 50 square feet per nursery school child and 40 square feet for all others through the intermediate grades. Examination of other recom-

mendations reveals general unwillingness to accept minimums of less than 40 and 30 square feet, respectively, exclusive of wardrobes and cloakrooms (3, 10, 14). Taking the ACEI recommended intermediate class size of 25 pupils and multiplying it by recommended floor space of 40 square feet per pupil gives us a room of 1000 square feet. Multiplying a minimum of 30 square feet per pupil by the common present-day figure of 35 pupils to the elementary-school classroom gives us 1050 square feet. And yet, schools in many parts of the country are being planned to provide 750-900 square feet per classroom. And classes of 40 children in rooms providing 750 square feet of space certainly are not unknown in modern America! How many of such rooms provide the minimum of 8 to 10 cubic feet of outside air per minute considered essential to odor removal? (20)

We find ourselves caught in a formidable set of pressures. On one side, costs of school construction being what they are, the temptation to keep room size at a minimum is an enticing one for all those close to financial considerations—and, regrettably, those closest to financial matters frequently are farthest from instructional ones.

Lined up with the cost of room space is the financial aspect of class size. No statistics are necessary to understand the money saved in a given year by placing 35 rather than 25 pupils with a teacher. Pressure to build more rather than larger classrooms wins out in the face of a national need to provide hundreds of thousands of elementary-school classrooms in the years ahead. The instructional budget is stretched to provide teachers for more and more children by cramming excessive numbers of them into classrooms built too small even for classes of "ideal" size. Meanwhile, teaching seems to be

getting increasingly complex. Teachers are becoming more insightful into what they should do—and could do were conditions more compatible with many seemingly unattainable objectives. What are the ultimate results of their frustration?

Effects of Class Size

Unfortunately, there is no conclusive research evidence regarding the effects of class size to offset the practical dollars-and-cents considerations. Otto and von Borgersrode present an interesting analysis of research beginning with a pioneer research period—1895-1916, and moving through four subsequent phases (17). To 1925, the studies—often only semi-controlled—sought to relate class size to measurable pupil achievement. There is nothing in the evidence to suggest that large classes materially affected attainment in subject matter under teaching techniques considered typical at the time. Of great interest today are the attempts, beginning about 1925, to relate class size to various teaching techniques. Although the results were inconclusive, the hypothesis of a possible relationship in a direct way. It takes very little analysis.

From 1926 to 1937, studies dealt with more specific factors such as the effect of class size upon pupil attitudes, teacher knowledge of individual pupils, and so forth (17). The literature since 1937 is filled with pleas for small classes, arbitrary recommendations of class size and room space, but virtually nothing that might be classified as controlled research bearing directly upon the problem. Certain recent research into group dynamics, noise, effects of teachers on pupil socialization, and so on, that appears on the surface to be peripheral, may be more significant to the problem than all of these seemingly more direct studies.

From his own analysis of available

materials, the present writer must agree with Otto and von Borgersrode when they report:

Class-size research to date has dealt with the following pupil factors: achievement and variability in achievement in the subject fields measurable by standardized tests, attention, discipline, self-reliance, attitudes, individual participation, and work habits. No one of these pupil factors has been measured adequately under sufficiently controlled and sufficiently extensive studies to provide a sound base for decisions on class size (17:215).

It must be pointed out that the bulk of available studies was conducted when lack of insight into certain common, present-day techniques limited research design. It would be interesting and perhaps revealing, for example, to apply covariance analysis to data collected in earlier studies or to approach these problem areas as projects in cooperative action research.

Some Formidable Questions

Class Size—Child Development?

Stendler and Young (22) question "ancient processes of evolution," the reason put forward by Gesell and Ilg, as the cause of certain negative characteristics identifiable with "sixness" in the first-grade child. They pose the thesis that these characteristics are at least partly due "... to the fact that the socialization process is being changed in important ways by the experience of beginning first grade" (22:242). Their analysis of mothers' reports showed that entrance to first grade is highly significant in the minds of six-year-olds and may bring about certain changes in a child's concept of self. Maas (12) discusses the importance of young children linking themselves to others who evidence similar feelings. Jenkins (8) puts forward the proposition that children will contribute to classroom processes in propor-

tion to their satisfaction of needs in the classroom situation. Bovard emphasizes the potential significance of classroom social interaction when he states:

It seems safe to assume from the present evidence that the amount of social interaction in the classroom will influence the individual student's perception, feelings, and interpersonal relations. . . The time may come when we will consider the kind of classroom experience the individual has had to be second in importance only to family experience in determining how he will relate to others, and to himself (1:223).

In line with the Stendler-Young hypothesis and the queries of Maas, Jenkins, and Bovard regarding socialization of children, certain important questions arise in relation to class size:

- Under significantly varying conditions of class size, do groups of six-year-olds reveal marked differences in the negative characteristics of "sixness" that may be identified?
- To what degree are children in large classes, compared to children in small classes, able to link themselves successfully to their peers?
- What differences in their concepts of self may be identified among children in small classes as compared with children in large classes?
- Does grade-level of the class or age-level of children affect findings in regard to the three questions above?

Class Size and Learning?

Learning and development are interrelated, of course, and cannot really be separated from one another. But let us consider for a moment the psychological processes of goal-setting, drive, goal-attainment, and satisfaction that accompany the learning act. The studies into the effect of group size on factors in learning, such as the Taylor-Faust study of efficiency in problem solving (23) are too restricted or too far removed from classroom day-to-day teaching to be very helpful. Some clues may be identifiable from studies into the effects of noise.

The studies by Pascal and Swenson (18) and by Mech (13) suggest what we might anticipate—that noise can serve to motivate supreme effort in performing a specific task and that subjects engaged in routine work tasks can learn to adapt to noise. But Hartmann, after an extensive analysis of the research, draws conclusions that may be significant for school people:

The great weight of the evidence, however, indicates that performances which are prized individually and socially tend to be reduced in varying degrees in auditory environments marked by annoying and distracting sounds. . . . The efficiency of all kinds of mental work, especially the more complex varieties, is generally lowered (6:149).

It simply is not sound to draw the inviting conclusion that large classes produce more noise and, therefore, more than small classes, block learning. But the evidence does raise some rather obvious questions about the possible effects of large classes, questions that need not be listed here. And it does suggest the desirability of doing everything possible to reduce needless noise in school buildings and of exploring class size and room space as factors in noise production.

Class Size and Teaching?

Thelen, in a few words, spans a formidable array of contributions to educational thought and practice and places teaching in its modern setting:

The work of Jennings, Tryon, and Bonney on sociometrics; of Barker on motivation and molar behavior; of Redl and Bettelheim on characteristics of therapeutic groups; of the Yale group on frustration and aggression; of Henry on group-process diagnosis via projective tests; of Davis on social-class and acculturation problems in the school—studies such as these provide convincing evidence that teaching can no longer be guided by ideas limited substantially to the unit organization of content, pleas for friendly interpersonal relations, descriptions of "desirable" personality traits of teachers, and a handful

of "teaching methods." Educators must see the classroom for what it is—an extremely complex, shifting web of interpersonal relations describable in terms of such dimensions as conflict, reinforcement, contagion, resistance, goal-direction, frustration, efficiency, expectancy, productivity, and the like (25:139).

Then, in summarizing and introducing a series of studies pertaining to instruction conducted in the Human Dynamics Laboratory at the University of Chicago, Thelen writes the following:

These researches taken together, appear to suppose some significant propositions:

- a. That the teacher's behavior in large measure determines the quality of emotional conditions in the classroom.
- b. That learning of certain social attitudes and human relations principles is affected by teacher-pupil interaction.
- c. That teacher-pupil interaction patterns may affect the student at deep, (i.e., subconscious) levels.
- d. That pupil-pupil interaction (e.g., status roles) can be influenced by teacher-pupil interaction (24:91, 92).

Now, some formidable questions regarding effects of class size come to the forefront when we relate these propositions for a theory of teaching to even a few specifics of classroom structure:

- Does teaching large classes over periods of several years cause maladjustment in teachers that is reflected negatively in their pupils? (For some insights into the possible effects of teacher adjustment upon pupil adjustment see references 4 and 21).
- Do large classes prohibit teachers from exercising significant guidance with children struggling with certain crucial developmental tasks? (See reference 16 for an analysis of the teacher's role in the peer group during middle childhood).
- What effect has class size upon the amount of teacher domination? How does pupil independence vary under differing conditions of class size? (For a discussion of possible effects of class size on pupil assumption of responsibility and pupil drive to participate, see reference 9).
- Under what conditions of class size are various teaching techniques most effective?

This last question appears to be of special significance. In many instances, mere reduction in class size is sheer waste of funds (see 7:214). There is little point in reducing a class from 45 to 30 in order that a given teacher may lecture to fewer pupils. Most lecturers, as a matter of fact, seem to be stimulated by a large lecture audience and do a better job. The possible relationship among class size, teacher concept of goal and appropriate method, and pupil outcomes is indeed worthy of careful exploration.

A New Look at an Old Problem

By Administrators

Those who plan and construct buildings, provide for maintenance, and see to it that teachers are allotted to classrooms, need to examine these activities critically. We need long-term studies to compare maintenance costs of buildings where classrooms are small and crowded with costs where classrooms are large and uncrowded. We need studies that seek to compare teaching holding power of crowded school systems with neighboring systems where pupil-teacher ratio is much lower. We need studies to explore possible effects of large classes upon such factors as teacher drop-out, teacher absence, and teacher morale. School principals might well explore possible relationships between interpersonal tension among faculty members and crowded classrooms.

By Parents

Parents can help immeasurably by providing the kinds of information sought by Stendler and Young (22). But perhaps they can serve more effectively in a direct way. It takes very little analysis of historical trends in education to warrant the conclusion that American

education is influenced more at any given time by financial than by child development considerations. When the evidence is in regarding class size and room space, parents more than teachers will be in a position to determine whether or not practice and research findings will be brought into line.

By Research Workers

Research workers, wherever you may be—teachers are too busy teaching large classes to be able to do all the research that is needed or even to dig out and draw implications from research that already has been done. Much of the research you have done is couched in language that few teachers can understand and is hidden away in journals they never see. That research has made your reputation secure. Your colleagues in the university will not desert you if you devote a little time to rewriting those studies for journals teachers read or to re-applying your theories to the problems teachers face daily. And if you should lose a little status, what a small price to pay for the unfailing gratitude of thousands of elementary-school teachers!

By Teachers

Teachers have so little control over the many factors that bring 30, or 35, or 40 children to them that they no doubt despair over doing anything at all about large classes and crowded conditions. But they can do much to adapt their teaching to the demands of the situations in which they find themselves. In one large class, for example, children engaged in a great deal of group work. During the time that these groups were at work, the entire room area covered by screwed-down desks was useless to the ongoing activity. Children clustered in the small amount of space left at the front, back, and sides of the room. Plac-

ing the desks in groups of two or three on runners would have made possible the clearing of considerably more floor space. Teachers can do much to find out what is happening to children in relation to factors of space and class size.* They can join hands with others who seek answers to these important educational questions. It is a matter of deep regret and professional self-reproach that many teachers, because of reasons that include unfortunate past experience with professors and research assistants, are unwilling to open their classroom doors to college research personnel.

But apart from what they can do by way of direct attack upon problems of room space and class size, teachers have another kind of professional responsibility. For some teachers, sad to relate, smaller classes mean simply fewer papers to mark, fewer report cards to complete, fewer children to keep in line, and a generally reduced work load. Since the chances of getting rid of persons who see no deeper than this are rather dim, perhaps we should seriously consider doubling their pupil load and spending the money thus saved on securing secretarial services for teachers who see reduced class size as a means of doing both a better and a different kind of job. Chances are that a teacher who cannot now see how a smaller group of children to teach will permit him to do a better job of collecting information about children, a better job of analyzing and using such data, a better job of seeing that children satisfy their basic needs in the classroom, a better job of interpreting children's behavior to parents, a better job of relating methods and materials of instruction to educational goals, is not ready for significant

* Action research procedures offer promise for the teacher wishing to improve teaching in relation to the conditions under which he works. For further study, see Stephen M. Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953.

reductions in class size. Let us, then, ask ourselves, "How would reducing the size

of my class from 35 to 25 pupils affect my teaching?"

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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DOES NOT EXIST TO REGIMENT OR STANDARDIZE children, nor does it exist to weed out children because of inability to meet certain prescribed courses of study . . . but the school can so order the circumstances of living that the energies of boys and girls are freed to seek positive values of interesting and creative living in terms of individual potentialities.—MARION NESBITT in *A Public School for Tomorrow*.

There is but one real justification for ACEI space demands—to promote necessary learning activities! How shall the community—parents and teachers—be sure of getting the space they need and their money's worth?

ARE WE GETTING OUR MONEY'S WORTH in the new school plants which are going up all over the nation? There are good reasons why this question is being asked more often. In the first place the annual cost of schoolhouse construction for the country is now close to two billion dollars. Despite this high expenditure we are hardly keeping up with the enrollments.

Another reason for the query about our money's worth is found in the great increase in building costs per pupil. A generation ago an elementary-school plant could be secured for approximately \$250 per child, while the figure is about \$1,000 today. Why an increase of 400 percent? Inflation is, of course, a major cause, but higher building standards and more liberal space requirements are also factors.

These circumstances, particularly in the face of some concern over decline in business activity, make it quite apparent that school people everywhere will need to justify as never before expenditures for school plants. Can these expenditures be soundly defended? The question can be answered affirmatively only after examination of what space is needed for learning, and whether or not space provided for learning is effectively used.

What Space Is Needed?

There is but one real justification for space: to promote necessary learning activities. To determine what these activities are we must begin with the purposes

Getting Our

of the school. Most lay-citizens and school workers alike agree that schools in our times must serve many purposes. They must help youngsters learn to read, write, and figure. But they must also be concerned with reflective thinking, with creativity, with health, with citizenship, and with moral values.

As one works with teachers in the elementary school he finds that they enumerate space needs about as follows: for writing, spelling, and arithmetic; for reading and library activities; for arts and crafts including such facilities as running water, work benches, and provisions for simple cooking; for science activities including the care of plants, animals, and fish; for dramatics, speech, puppetry, and dancing; for music activities including the use of a record player; and for hobby and display activities.

Perhaps not quite so directly related to instruction but facilitating to instruction is another list of essential space requirements. They include such needs as the following: for conference and isolation; for rest—particularly in primary grades; for washing and toileting; and for storing of supplies, books, clothing, and other items.

Of course, a single space can in many instances be used for more than one kind of learning activity, but in a good elementary-school room today there is probably need for the following spaces: a general work area, a library corner, a focal point for dramatics, an art and crafts center, a music center, and the auxiliary facilities already mentioned. A room for 25 or 30 pupils providing these facilities will need to contain about 1000 square feet which is the minimum stand-

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By ROALD F. CAMPBELL

Money's Worth

ard recommended by the National Council on Schoolhouse Construction.¹

Restricted Space Does What?

What happens when teaching goes on in cramped quarters? One wishes that more research on this most important question had been done. Observation of teaching and conversation with teachers, however, do provide some data. In crowded rooms, let us say 35 or more children in the typical classroom of the 1920's, the instructional program is definitely restricted. There is relatively little art, particularly art where big body movements are desired. There are few rhythm or dance activities. Children have few choices of activity, for usually only one activity at a time can be attempted. There is little room for the display of hobby interests or of materials developed as part of the instructional program. Except where partially prevented by the heroic efforts of teachers, the program becomes formal, bookish, and inflexible.

The interpersonal relations between pupils and teacher, and among pupils are also affected by cramped space. As one teacher put it, "In this little room we just get into each other's hair." And another remarked, "When a person gets edgy we don't have a place where we can go and cool down" Children, like Daniel Boone, need "elbow room." Crowded conditions require that the teacher keep a "tight rein." *School discipline instead of learning becomes the major concern.*

This occupation with discipline, with control, with regulation is most taxing,

particularly to people who would like to help youngsters grow and who enjoy sharing ideas with children. One need but read a recent description of New York City schools² to appreciate this dilemma. The fact that in some schools policing has become more important than teaching, in my judgment, keeps some of our best talent out of the teaching profession. This is a serious matter in face of an ever-mounting teacher shortage.

One precaution needs to be taken. A plea for adequate space should not suggest that space alone will insure good teaching. Competent teachers are still the first requisite. Even with good teachers and liberal space there may be other deterrents. Floor space may be ample but storage space entirely inadequate. Clothing space may be provided but only in noisy lockers. South windows in some buildings make temperature and light control a nightmare. Even so, it seems clear that space is necessary to a modern school program. Therefore, we can conclude that to get our money's worth we must have space.

Is Space Appropriately Used?

Is the space now provided in many of our newer buildings being appropriately used? There are those who contend that at the secondary level some of the space provided for music rooms, auditoriums, gymnasiums, swimming pools, and certain other facilities is a waste so far as the central purpose of the school is concerned.³ If this is true, it applies much less, in my judgment, to elementary-school plants. At the same time I believe every space request for any school plant should require justification in terms of school purposes and/or community pur-

¹ National Council on Schoolhouse Construction, *Guide for Planning School Plants*. W. D. McClusking. Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, 1953, Ch. 3.

² See G. Robert Koopman, "A New Theoretical Approach to Secondary School Planning." *The Nation's Schools*. (Dec. 1953) Pp. 50-57.



School people and citizens should decide what living and learning activities they wish to accommodate.

Public Schools
Milwaukee, Wisc.

poses. This means building from the inside out, and not from the outside in as a few architects are still wont to do.

The other aspect of the question requires us to look at the larger classrooms of today and see to what extent they are being used to promote the many kinds of learning activities. While there seems to be little research upon this question, one gets the very definite impression from limited observation and inquiry that most teachers are making appropriate use of the space they have at hand. Only in those cases where a formal program is maintained in face of space to do otherwise, would we have to conclude we are not getting our money's worth.

Some Suggestions

The considerations which have been discussed prompt certain suggestions which will be offered here:

1. Prior to the erection of any school plant, the school people and the citizens should decide what living and learning activities they wish the plant to accommodate. This provides

the only sound basis for architectural planning. Moreover, it is the best insurance that when the space is provided it will be appropriately used.

2. Should school people and citizens decide upon a formal program, it seems fair to say that regular classrooms need not be as large. Quite possibly, however, there will be more need for special rooms.

3. There is a paucity of research on the relationship between space and learning. Only after much research of this kind is done can this problem be conclusively answered.

4. In face of the inevitable lag in building construction, we should make the best possible use of the space now available. For instance, use of hallways and special rooms to supplement the regular classrooms, use of flexible furniture to permit a greater variety of activities, and provision of adequate lighting and sound control to make rooms more livable.

5. Since school plants are expensive and the volume of needed construction greater than ever before, we shall all have to make the case for more space as never before. This means that we must help the citizen begin with the purposes of education, comprehend the learning activities conducive to the achievement of those purposes, and see the space requirements for such activities.

WHAT DOES CROWDING DO?

Everyone talks about crowding and its effects on children, but what are we doing about gathering the evidence? Anecdotal material was contributed from people in 30 localities. We are impressed with the concern teachers have for children—how they are attempting to meet the needs of children in the face of tremendous handicaps. We are impressed with children whose comments in the face of hard situations show recognition of the difficulties. We are impressed with parents who keep working in many ways to lessen the hardships. We hope that the accounts inspire you to read Marie Hughes' request for help on page 375. This is only the beginning!*

Where Do You Put Them?

If there simply are not schoolrooms for all the children—Where do you put them? The following anecdotes suggest some of the solutions and some of the problems raised.

Our school is in a religious school building. On Friday afternoons, the public school teachers must lock away all materials, clear bulletin boards, dismantle projects. The conscientious teacher spends one to one and a half hours of her own time on Fridays and Mondays organizing; the less devoted one takes valuable instructional time to do this.

Children who live in crowded apartments or rooms find little release and room to spread out at school.

Classes are being held in the auditorium of the administration building. The

one large room is divided into eight sections by curtains. In the first grade there are 80 children with one teacher. Needless to say, the children at the perimeter of the "room" cannot hear their own teacher because they are so distracted by the sounds coming from the other side of the curtain.

We have two substandard basement classrooms in each of the elementary buildings. All four classrooms are very light as there is relatively adequate window area. However the nearness to the toilets poses a ventilation problem. The utilization of this basement area has taken the space previously used for instrumental lessons, band practice, and play activities. These must now be carried on in book or supply rooms, medical rooms, or corridors.

Three houses were rented to serve as

*Arkansas: Arkadelphia, Ruth Guthrie.

California: San Diego, Sally W. Lowry.

Florida: Daytona Beach, Bonnie Mixon; Jacksonville, Mrs. Hilda Beauchamp, Nada Hackett, Frankie L. McCoy, Gladys Spencer; Holly Hill, Margaret Brokaw, Bertha Cady, Betty Culpepper, Bonnie Dunlop, Margaret Green, Dorothy Horstmyer, May R. Hutson, Marguerite Lowry, Margaret F. Ogle, Betty Reasor, Hazel C. Rich, Merelyn S. Spiegel; Mayo, Mr. and Mrs. Beecher Payne; West Palm Beach, Ivyl F. Pirtle.

Indiana: Michigan City, Frances Timm Dobeski.

Maine: Millinocket, Ruth E. Mayo.

Michigan: Grand Rapids, Beatrice A. Termeer.

Nebraska: Lincoln, Clara Evans.

New York: Bay Shore, Leda Strasser; White Plains, Jeannette Monroe.

Ohio: Cincinnati, Lillian M. Ciarniello, Marian Lane.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma City, Chloe Glessner.

Oregon: Myrtle Creek, Edna E. Helgeson; Portland, Florence E. Wright.

Pennsylvania: Abington, Louise E. Schafer; Emmaus, Margaret F. Derr.

Rhode Island: Cranston, Elaine Macmann; Edgewood, Vernette R. Mowry; Newport, Helen Lawrence Crocker.

Texas: Corpus Christi, Evelyn Herrington.

Utah: Provo, Catherine Bowles.

Vermont: Putney, Elizabeth M. Simonds.

Washington: Everett, Beth H. Griesel; Yakima, Louise M. Gridley.

Wisconsin: Kenosha, Avis Martelle.

Canada, British Columbia: Victoria, Joyce E. Applegate.

classrooms. Imagine 31 fourth graders divided into two groups, one in the living room, another in the bedroom with the teacher standing in the kitchen door where she can see all those except the ones behind the planter's box dividing the living room and kitchen.

The children were in the basement of the city hall—under a gymnasium on which basketball practice was held, and within earshot of the band practice room—the period of heroic acceptance of the situation did not last long. At first it was sort of a joke to try to recite and be suddenly outdone by noise from someone having fun. In a situation like that only a sense of humor and an interesting program could keep the class morale up.

A large group of 40 crowded into what had been a science room in the junior high school building. We were proud of the nice new solid appearance of the room until we realized that we only had one small bulletin board. We could not see out the windows because they had been designed for larger children. We had to eliminate our pet hobbies and library corner because we just had no room for them.

In 1949, I had 52 seventh-grade children. There were few regulation seats, only auditorium chairs and wobbly, makeshift tables. I wanted to expose the children to more than the 3 R's.

All of us were jammed tightly. The separation between desks was no more than six inches. Children became too well acquainted and quarrels began. With patience and shifting they eased.

In this school one class was held on the gymnasium floor, and one behind the curtain on the stage, with no insulation between. Bedlam! Especially when the vocal and instrumental music classes were held in the gymnasium during my teaching attempts. The greatest distrac-

tion was the rainy day recesses. And you should have heard the yells of the basketball boys!

Now I have 32. And the children and I are doing things! We have room to breathe, to do murals and friezes, dioramas, and other projects. A good social environment exists. We have four reading groups where I can give individual attention to one group while the other three silently work somewhere in the room. I am planning a field trip soon because I am sure that I can corral 32.

Partial solutions: Lacking public kindergartens, the PTA is sponsoring several kindergartens with trained personnel. One of these groups is housed in a multiple purpose room of a parish house. There is a group of first graders whose sixth birthdays fall later than September 30, the deadline for entry in public school. Surroundings in general for these groups are excellent, but the actual space is far short of ACEI standards.

Double sessions produce problems:

- Children have no personal belongings as two share the same desk, books.
- Bulletin boards are shared by both classes, so impossible to display every child's work at the same time.
- The room is constantly in use for eight hours by two sets of people and thus the health angle enters in.
- The afternoon is poor learning time for little children.
- Lack of adequate space for tutoring children who need extra help.
- There is little or no time for the teacher to plan or fix up the room.

Limited School Facilities

Limited laboratory facilities lead to an inflexible, rigid program. Because four toilets serve 185 children, a tightly scheduled laboratory period is necessary.

A child said: At the beginning of the fall term one little girl went home and said, "Mother, we don't do anything but go to the bathroom." It seemed to her

as if it took *forever* for 75 first graders to be toileted and get water.

The lack of proper playground area creates a necessity for a rigid time allotment. This means that a classroom activity may be interrupted while interest is at its highest peak in order to meet the play schedule. At other times games must cease before the interest of the children lags. This causes loss of interest on the part of the children and forces the teacher to be a clock-watcher.

The use of playground equipment, such as slides, swings, and merry-go-round when limited to one period a week for each class is frustrating when inclement weather or other interruptions interfere.

Physical education was curtailed. This year the enrollment per teacher was increased, and those youngsters who did not take band or excel in team athletics did without any gym period.

Some of these grades did not have any free period except for lunch. I repeatedly found some of these girls in the nurse's room, sometimes weeping hysterically she "was too full of nerves."

The school cafeteria can prove to be a "bottleneck" at times, even though run on routine schedule. Some groups of children may have to eat hurriedly, prodded by the teacher in order to make room for oncoming groups. With such a crowded lunchroom, oftentimes another group may be "hemmed in," having to wait its turn until the group previously served has departed to the tray window. The tension mounts in such close quarters, creating disturbances and discipline problems among pupils.

"It takes twice as long to receive help from the librarian—everything we do takes longer than it should by the sheer weight of numbers. All this cuts down on work time."

The children were seated on a rug listening to a story. Janet caused a disturbance. When she was questioned later she said, "I love stories but I don't like to sit close to people and have them always touching me."

With only one small auditorium and so many large grades it's almost impossible to work out a schedule where grades can have the use of the stage to practice. Seating of large groups is also a handicap. Good community relations can be promoted by programs to which the parents are invited!

The children have said:

- We never get to display all of our work—there isn't room.
- People shouldn't move around, we can't see the board.
- I wish we had more room to square dance, it would be more fun.
- All of us don't get to do nice things, like making special posters.
- These aisles are ~~so~~ small that I bump my head when looking in my desk.
- Somebody knocked my arm and made me ruin my work.

What Do They Do?

Our room is crowded, the movable desks are now in straight, tight rows. We cannot push them together enough to provide space for even a small cage for a rabbit with space for children to gather around to observe or care for the pet. So we look at books and pictures and miss all the fun of actually caring for a pet.

What about trips? Pet stores are usually not large and I have found store owners reluctant to consent to having 45 first graders crowd in with all the cats, dogs, and birds. So another firsthand experience is missed.

It is indeed fortunate if a child has a pet at home and the group is invited

to visit. It takes careful planning for such a trip to be successful.

A trip to the town library must be planned for a special hour, when not too many other people are there. Even then not all children can find pet books nor even places at the library tables, nor can all see or hear what the librarian is trying to say.

There is neither time nor a quiet corner where a small group may gather for activities or discussion which would help the inarticulate child too timid to speak in a large group.

Each morning during "planning period" suggestions are made for the best use of the free activity period (half of the children have it in the morning, the other half in the afternoon).

Often children in the free activity group hampered by too little space create disturbing noises. So time and again children are asked to go back to their seats and their activity time is lost. Freedom with control is not an easy lesson for children to learn under these adverse conditions.

Can anyone imagine what it is like to see that 45 first-grade children are properly dressed four times a day for outdoor play or home dismissal? Imagine matching pairs of mittens and lost scarves. And there are zippers that refuse to open or shut. Imagine seeing that 90 rubbers and boots are on the right 90 feet, when sizes, colors, and makes are so often the same. Confusion, frustration, tears, and sometimes angry parents belong in this picture. The 10 or 15 minutes required for the children to dress four times a day takes a large cut out of the school day.

We had a wonderful year when there were only 34 of us. The children learned much more than the traditional 3 R's—they learned how to work cooperatively in small groups . . .

They put to immediate use rules of safety and courteous conduct, when trips were indicated . . . Their growth in language arts was evidenced by their facile use of words as well as their ability to listen intelligently . . . Our movable furniture was often pushed to one side allowing space . . .

Above all, each child knew there would be time each day when teacher would help him with his particular difficulty. There was time for special class work to which children brought their problems or received help in preparing to read a story orally for an audience situation. There was time and space to do all these things, with fun and laughter an expected part of each day.

A crowded classroom pushed me into finding a way of helping children work independently. In so doing leadership was developed, cooperation was secured, children became more creative, and the teacher found the joy which comes from seeing children grow as they purpose, plan, and work together. It began when 54 fourth graders faced me one September morning.

We formed groups and elected group leaders. Each day these leaders directed their groups, some to the library for research, some to the lunch room to make a mural, a diorama, a movie, puppets, salt clay maps, or to construct a house, hut, or castle, or to make stage scenery. Some chose a spot on the playground, when weather permitted, to rehearse plays and dances. Others worked in the room making blackboard displays, or room decorations. I moved from group to group giving guidance when necessary.

As our interests developed this became our pattern of procedure: different groups with new leaders and an outlet for tensions arising from too little elbow room.

Reading groups were formed in the same way. One group read orally, one used the library to read silently for enjoyment, others used any available space elsewhere in the building to prepare plays, songs, dances, poems, puppet plays for sharing stories they had read.

Children's Needs—Met and Unmet

A child is lost when he needs greatly to be found. He has little chance of recognition except by being a pest. Even being a pest, while it brings recognition,



Photo by Philip A. Jacobson, Wilmette, Ill.

Children need space and time for many kinds of activities.

does not assure him any solution of his difficulty. It only throws him more and more into the pattern that began his undesirable chain-reaction.

A kindergarten child says, with an optimistic hope, "Oh, mother, next year I'll be bigger and then the principal will know me!"

One of the fours refused to come to Sunday School after the first few weeks. Finally the mother learned the reason.

The registration was increasing weekly and so were the limitations on movement and recognition. This child explained, "I had a friend; now I can't find her."

One little girl, who had been in a first-grade group of 20, was quite unhappy in second grade where there were 38 children. One day four pupils withdrew or transferred. The following day four or five were sick or absent. The teacher while reading with a group looked up from her book at Barbara and

gave her a warm, swift smile. The next day Barbara's mother said, "Yesterday Barbara came home from school so elated and happy. She said, 'Mrs. Graham gave the nicest smile just for me. I guess she can get around to everyone now with four people moved away and so many absent.' "

A child whose work dropped off drooped unhappily for several days before I could talk with her long enough (and privately enough) to find out that her father had left her mother, and of course the child was miserable. Talking about it helped—but I had been too busy to understand.

Eager, second-grade Stephen wanted to make a globe for himself. We needed to find time to talk alone about materials he would need and the procedure he would follow: space to work, the best time to work, who could help him. But every day the day passed and we had not gotten around to him, because Jeffry and Chuck needed constant direction. The other 30 were not yet able to work independently for long enough periods, and Stephen would look up at me and say, "When are we going to start my globe?" He came to school on a bus, so there was no time before or after school without special arrangements. His mother did not have the use of a car. But finally, with very special planning for every one of the 30 others, we *did* get around to that very special thing for Stephen.

The Need To Feel Group Unity

He sat there with a worried look on his small face. I saw him but said nothing, for I knew him well last year and realized that when he was ready he would unburden his soul to me. Soon he stood beside me, and looking into my eyes said, "Do you know what, Miss C? Last year our room was just like a big

family all the time and we had such fun, but now it is . . . it is . . . it's just like Hash!"

In moving from a 17 room school to one with five rooms playground reactions were most noticeable:

Few, if any accidents, no "tale carrying." The children knew others in all classes—seemed friendlier and definitely more thoughtful.

Parents remarked that children are happier and not frightened of recess.

Children feel important in our small school, that they really belong and are helping in its management.

Confusions—Interruptions—Anxiety

Sharing is important but there are times when a child needs to feel security because of his own designated spot—desk, chair, locker space—some place in a crowded classroom to call his own.

Anxiety is noted when it is time to put on wraps, fear is evident—cry easily, call out excitedly, "I can't find my coat," "Somebody took my hat," "I've lost my rubbers." This sort of anxiety is promoting insecurity.

Experience has shown that when only two or three go to cloak room at a time, there is no apparent anxiousness, but it takes 45 minutes out of session, particularly at this time of year with ski pants and other wraps. It is part of their training to put on their own wraps. More fist fights, pinching, quarreling are noted. My observations lead me to believe this is a result of tenseness caused from group confusion.

The teacher had noted on several occasions the floundering and unhappy attitude of a sixth-grade boy. Walking down by his desk, she said, "What seems to be your trouble, Hank?"

"Ah, Mrs. H, when I look in front of me I see Susan's hair parted in the

middle and her pigtails, when I look to the side I see John's work, and if I look at the other side I see Mary's work. I don't want to see the other kids' work. I want to do my own."

"Would you like to sit at my desk for awhile and work?"

"No, that's all right, but I wish that I did have room to think."

In a kindergarten of 50 children one child yelled, "Teacher, teacher, who is the boss?" The teacher said, "Oh, the boys and girls, sometimes Miss Joan, and sometimes Miss Evans. We all work it out." Child, "With all these kids you had better have a boss."

After a class discussion on sharing, being pleasant, being considerate, exercising self-control, and being happy, one little girl said, "You know, Mrs. H, as close as we live and work in this room, and we get along pretty good, we ought to be able to get along with the Russians when we grow up."

Many times this occurs— "She bit me," wailed Ellen Lou. "Yes, I did," Joyce declared defiantly. "She got in my way. Somebody is always getting in my way when I am trying to paint. I wish we could move this easel out in the hall." Then she added bitterly, "People are out there, too."

Joyce's mother reports that she comes home each day with increased fatigue, shriller voice, quicker temper outbursts. "She acts just as she did if I ever took her Christmas shopping. Crowds of people have always made her cross and nervous."

A child said: During the course of the morning, one six-year-old boy had his crayons pushed from the table where he was sitting. They went scattering on the floor making a distracting noise, and irritating the child.

He picked them up carefully and arranged them in order back in the box, and the classwork proceeded with its regular routine.

Suddenly the same noise sounded again. The teacher looked up from the reading group, and there were the same crayons on the floor again.

The little boy in a state of emotion said to the teacher, "If you'd move Janice off our table, we'd have more room, and our things wouldn't get pushed on the floor."

Results in 3 R's Differ, Too

In a 10 room school where for years there had been one grade to one class, (45-50 children), it became possible one year to have two classes. Achievement tests given children of these smaller classes showed benefit of thorough groundwork made possible because of fewer numbers. Marks were graphed throughout second, third, and fourth grades of these same children, and in fundamentals all were well above classes of previous years. The majority of these pupils maintained high standards right through elementary school.

One nine-year-old, when asked what he'd like to read said, "Just any story that doesn't make you stop to draw lines under and put right words in." When questioned further, he explained, "In the school I came from we had five reading groups, so while we waited for our turn we did workbooks so's to use up the wasted time." He had not learned to read well.

Parent Reactions

During parent conferences they reported: (1) Children would like to paint. We explained they must take turns. (2) My child would like to sit by you during story time. (3) My child

would like to pass crackers during milk lunch. (4) The parents desired more time for conferences.

The parents of pupils needing help get discouraged too, and don't know where to turn for aid, especially when the parent has had little formal education. They are often unable to assist, and the teacher is overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers!

There were 32 mothers and fathers to get acquainted with. With at least one home visit a term, and the minimum of a half hour visit, how quickly can you get to really know a person? And yet without the help of all these wonderful parents, it would have been impossible to accomplish half of what we did. Our two room mothers worked very hard.

Our PTA's have just completed taking the census for next year's probable kindergarten enrollment. As a result the school board is including in the budget provisions for an additional kindergarten teacher and room set-up in my building. However, this is not definite until the appropriations have been voted at town meeting.

The Teacher's Unfinished Work

Words such as "frustrating," "exhausting," "discouraged," "guilt," and "driven" come from the teachers' reports of too many children. Here are some direct quotations:

"The teacher who selected his life work because of love for children and love of knowledge becomes frustrated when he sees children leave him. He knows of much he could have given, the many avenues of interest he could have charted if he could have worked in calmness and companionship with them within a well-ordered small group."

"With limitations of work space and time allotment, many times things must be done on a 'wholesale basis'—all doing the same activity at the same time—with little attention to group processes and diversified interests."

"I find it extremely difficult to meet the needs of every child, every day. Although a large portion of our time in school is spent in sharing, planning, and working together, we still need the personal contact of teacher and child."

"Happily, many children in any group can carry themselves forward on the day's program after preliminary instruction. These children become a chronic ache in the teacher's heart as he sees them marching ahead along the path of knowledge alone when he wants so badly to accompany them."

Teachers look at double sessions: "We are all driven by the thought that we are not accomplishing the usual amount of work. The children sense this also."

"As a classroom teacher, I *nearly* welcome the times of year when mumps and measles and chicken pox cut the enrollment one-third. I know that month will result in maximum group participation in all activities, satisfying experiences in many areas where the children may work in small groups with closer guidance than normally possible, and most important of all, more teacher-time for individual children."

"It is almost impossible for a teacher to do his best work in guidance and instructions when compelled to talk above the noise and activity in the room. It is exhausting!"

"With no free periods, there is the problem of the teacher's going to the rest room when necessary. It is harder to leave a large group of children, even for just a few minutes."

"In order to experience any satisfaction with this class, I reported to school at 7:45 AM and *never* would leave until 5 or 5:30 PM. I would bring home a couple hours of work to do. I had to struggle to keep ahead of my class."

"My social life that year was cur-

tailed for my job came first. A teacher unprepared spent a sad day disciplining problem children."

"It's a bad situation when a parent meets you on the street, inquires about his child and you have to ask the name."

"Every teacher is interested in each of his pupils. During times of sickness, sometimes even hospitalization, a visit from the teacher adds a touch of personal interest. When teachers have such large groups, there isn't much time for visiting."

"The teacher has some responsibility for making the community a better place for growing children and young people but if he is overtaxed by crowded conditions his energy is depleted—thus the community and the child suffer."

"Children eat in their classrooms with the teacher supervising. This offers little opportunity for the teacher to be sociable and share the events of the day with his colleagues; this is important if we are to have good spirit."

Records and reports take time. The teacher of an oversize class spends too great a proportion of time and energy on the "mechanics."

Here are some statistics concerning my class of 46 sixth graders: (all figures are approximated but typical).

- The checking and recording of a battery achievement test requires one hour for each pupil. Tests are given twice a year—total, 92 hours.

- Our report cards, with accompanying notes to parents, with duplicate grade sheets for the office, require a minimum of 30 minutes for each child—six times a year. Total, 138 hours.

- Add to this several periods weekly for studying arithmetic, spelling, or composition papers done by children—to say nothing of faculty meetings, PTA, and others.

- Visiting in the homes is a valuable experience for the teacher—another 20 hours at least, including transportation time.

Conclusion

The aggregate picture here presented has not been entirely gloomy. The reason, we think, is found in this closing remark from one report:

"Teachers and children, for the most part, accept the impaired working conditions which overcrowding produces. They secure maximum educational experiences from each situation even while working to better the conditions. Parents are aroused and ready to do what is necessary for the welfare of their children."

Is the 1/2 Day Session Full Measure?

By LOUISE L. SMITH and THOMAS D. HORN

AS SCHOOL PERSONNEL SEARCH THEIR souls for defensible ways to alleviate crowded conditions in the elementary classrooms, the half-day session appears to be one of the easier ways out. Faced with parents and teachers who are con-

cerned and sometimes frankly belligerent, an answer must be given to the question, "Is the half-day session desirable?"

The obvious first step in trying to compare the effect of the half-day with that of full-day sessions is to attempt

to measure differences in "academic achievement." Particularly for the primary grades, instruments now available for this kind of measurement rarely show a true measure of achievement. Differences in curricula, methods, and pupil ability combine to obscure any results that may be obtained. In addition, the term "academic" ordinarily pertains to reading, arithmetic, and spelling. Measures of emotional and social development, creative ability, art and music appreciation, and other enrichment activities are not yet widely available or used.

In a study by the Austin, Texas, Public Schools which recognized the limitations of using "academic achievement" alone, a somewhat different comparison was devised. Noting the fact that so-called academic achievement would provide *some* information, the differences between mean gains of full and half-day sessions for the second and third grades (grade one was not tested) in six schools, 32 classes in all, were tested for significance and compared with the time allotments for each area measured.

In the second grade, the half-day classes spent more class time on the basic academic subjects than the full-day classes did, but the full-day classes showed a greater mean gain in word meaning and average achievement than the half-day classes. These differences in mean gains were found to be statistically significant in favor of the full-day classes.

The full-day classes in the third grade showed a greater mean gain in reading and average achievement than the half-day classes, despite the fact that the half-day classes allotted more time to the basic subjects than the full-day classes. However, these differences were not statistically significant.

Besides the comparisons made in the preceding paragraphs, some additional findings are worth mentioning. While the basic subjects were given full attention in the half-day classes in terms of time allotment, the enrichment activities were eliminated, alternated with other activities, or were given less time than they would receive in a full-day class.

Some problems, such as discipline, fatigue in children, and a variety of activities were anticipated and met successfully by most of the teachers. Frequent changes in activity and rest periods were some of the means used to meet the problems just mentioned. One major handicap in this area that most primary teachers mentioned was the general lack of enrichment and "fun" activities. This was usually due to a concern for providing the fundamentals.

The majority of the teachers felt that half-day teaching was harder on them personally and would prefer full-day teaching. When adequate work space was available, the half-day teachers made good use of their "free" half-day for preparation.

The parents, whose reactions were reflected by the teachers and principals, preferred full-day classes, but were cooperative and understanding of the situation which necessitated half-day classes.

In conclusion, it must be said that the half-day session is a practical, if not satisfactory solution to the problem of overcrowding in our schools. The differences in mean gains as compared with time allotments by full-day and half-day sessions indicate that the concentration on the "academic" subjects by half-day classes does not provide a satisfactory substitute for the enriched program of the full-day classes.

This material has been taken from Louise L. Smith's master's thesis, *A Study of the Effect of Half-Day Classes in the Austin Public Schools*. The thesis was prepared under the direction of Thomas D. Horn, University of Texas, 1953.

Where Do We Go Next?

You can help with the needed research on the relation of class size to the quality of living and learning in the classroom.

THE ACEI RECOMMENDATION REGARDING class size is based *on opinion of many* educators who are experienced and sensitive to needs of children, rather than based on objective facts that are describable quantitatively and qualitatively. Evidence needs to be gathered on classrooms of varying sizes.

Who Is To Gather Data?

The teacher on the job may be considered the most strategic person in this process of gathering data. There are data which he can record himself. In any event, he must be receptive to the presence of others in his classroom who may be recording certain aspects of behavior.

The principal could set aside time for systematic observation and recording.

College students may be trained to record behavior in classrooms of varying size—25, 30, 35, 40, and 40 plus. This experience should be exciting and useful to them.

Parents hear remarks from children which often provide real insight into how the child feels and how he views his real world. Requests may be made to parents to jot down such remarks with date, time, and situation in which the remark was made.

What Data Should Be Gathered?

We have chosen three areas in which actual behavior can be recorded:

First, a reasonable hypothesis is that children are more frustrated under con-

ditions of overcrowdedness. That is, they have much waiting to do and may experience extreme boredom, have insufficient materials, and so forth. How may we gather evidence on frustration? *Overt conflict* between children and between groups constitutes one means of determining the amount of frustration existing in classrooms of various sizes.

A second area of deep concern and profound effect upon the quality of living experienced by children is their relations with the teacher. Which children are spoken to and visited with during the day or before school in the morning? Are they the same children? Do opportunities for contact arise which you as teacher can't take advantage of because of other pressures? Do only a few children have individual contact with the teacher? What is the nature of the teacher's verbal remarks to the children? Is there a sharing period where children's presentations are received by teacher and group? Who does the sharing? What happens in terms of waiting for a turn, length of time it takes to get around so that children grow restless or the period is cut; opportunity to see and handle objects?

A third area of interest for evidence pertains to the experiences provided for children in rooms of different space accommodating different size groups. For this purpose an actual daily log of activities would be an appropriate means of assessing the alleged differences in learning opportunities. These logs should be

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secured from many parts of the country to cancel out differences in policies of school systems. They should be secured on a sampling basis of different weeks, say six times a year; and in other cases kept for a continuous six weeks period.

Evidence—Opinion—Variables

We may define evidence as the phenomena which observed by another person of similar training would be seen in the same way. Records made of such observations can be standardized so that comparisons may be made from one observation to the next and from one classroom to another. This means the standardization of the length of time during which the phenomena was observed—such as 5, 10, or 20 minute periods. It means that the situation or setting of the observation will be described.

The acceptable evidence from these reports "piles up" from one part of the country to another, and can be checked against common sense—i.e. the added length of time it takes to care for the physiological needs of children—eating and elimination. Certainly it takes longer to feed 35 children than to feed 25; also, it takes longer for toileting. It sounds reasonable that children will grow restless in line, but what do the children do? We need more behavioral evidence. Detailed records of happenings as the children stand in line would give important evidence of quality of living. Are the complaints children make coming from the same pupils? What does the teacher do? What is the nature of his remarks to children? How are children hurried?

Opinion growing out of many observations, such as the one frequently expressed that children are more quarrelsome, may be used as "a hunch" or hypothesis which permits the setting up of careful observations.

Opinion, however, has unique value when it expresses, "This is the way I feel about it." Again, our present records contain unmistakable evidence on two points: (1) teachers are frustrated because they feel that they cannot do all that they wish to do for children; (2) they are experiencing great fatigue. The feelings that are expressed are valuable data because evidence regarding feelings can be gathered in no other way.

A short word on the control of variables: in this situation of gathering evidence on the effects of overcrowding, among the variables are the number in the classroom, size of the classroom, activities promoted or presented, the teacher, composition of the classroom group (such as number of boys and girls, children with problems); adequacy of instructional materials (adequacy for this purpose being availability in relation to children—10 books for 20 children, several rooms using the same basic materials); and who is in the classroom; for example, on a day when there are fewer children numerically, does it *always* make a difference in the behavior of children or is the difference in behavior noted only when certain children are absent?

Since we are gathering our data on the job as it is, we are not setting up conditions that control our variables, but we can describe the conditions with such accuracy that the variables can be determined, at least in part, in the final compilation and interpretation of the records. The original data must be an accurate record of what happened under what conditions.

The need for objective evidence from throughout the country is very real. It is a job for ACEI. We can do it. *If you are interested, write the Washington office for further assistance. The address is 1200 - 15th St. N.W., Washington 5, D.C.*

SOCIAL EDUCATION

What Direction?

What Guides?

What Help?

By PAULINE HILLIARD



University of Florida, Gainesville

What Direction?

THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL EDUCATION are the problems of learning to be human and to understand and relate to the humanity of others. No one of us is born with good or bad behavior patterns. It is through the experiences which our families, schools, churches, and communities give each of us that we gain the social learnings which help us become the human persons we are.

Teachers all across our country are concerned with giving children the best help they can in order that children may *live well with each other and learn intelligent ways to recognize and solve their problems* as human beings. Development of this kind can never be accomplished through introducing special social learnings into the school program as a subject or through teaching children neatly packaged chunks of content from the designated social studies subjects.

Improving the quality of living and learning of any group of human beings is a social process and to be fulfilled must draw from any and all of knowledge as man has organized it from history and geography through the sciences, religion, literature, and arts.

It is clear then that the direction and guides for those concerned with social education will be found in the kind of human beings we want and believe our country and the world needs.

If all the parents and teachers of all our boys and girls were asked what human qualities they wanted the schools to help develop in their children the answers would present many and wide variances. But the values underlying a democratic society can give us a basic sense of direction on which to make the

choices of human qualities we would attempt to develop.

Let us examine a statement of some of these qualities summarized from the thinking of a group of teachers. They said,

We are trying to help boys and girls who are learning:

- to recognize and deal with their problems with one another in their own group and with other groups of children in the school.
- to recognize and deal with their problems and interests with other people in their families and in the communities as they come in direct contact with them.
- to be interested in and concerned in alive, dynamic ways about the problems and interests of children and adults in other parts of our country and the world.
- to grow in appreciation and discrimination of the values of others' contributions—today's and through the years.
- to grow in an understanding that the acceptance of values on the part of an individual gives direction to his action.
- to make decisions in matters that count with them in terms of values they understand and examine.
- to grow in continuous self-evaluation.
- to work in small groups, large groups, and alone.

• to live with and use in meaningful ways many kinds of material and media for discovering facts, solving problems, enriching self-expression and the communications between people.

Thoughtful parents and teachers would add to, modify, and interpret such statements as these in terms of their own understandings and specific values.

What Guides?

The challenge of social education is to help children grow in human sensitivity and in the skills of intelligent problem solving. Teachers then are faced with the disturbing problem of *what and how*. Out of all the possible present experiences and out of all the mass of accumulated knowledge what can be drawn and how can we use that which

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will contribute to this kind of human development?

There are two major sources from which teachers may draw guidance as they select the social education experiences for children:

(1) the interests, concerns, and needs of the human beings in a particular group (children first—but also their teachers, parents, and others directly involved in an experience situation);

(2) the problems and resources of our culture and society—our communities and the world.

These two sources of experiences and learnings are interrelated though not identical. Out of one's experiences in society come many of his interests and needs, and likewise through the resources in the environment are one's needs and interests satisfied. For man is both nurtured and denied, freed and limited through the resources and problems in his environment. At the same time the conditions of the environment are modified and changed by man. Inner developmental controls and emotional tone of each child's life determine in part his interests and response to environment.

Interests, Concerns, and Needs

Children's interests, concerns, and needs are a reliable source from which we may draw guidance as we determine what experiences and learnings will promote the social growth. In the first place we know that interest offers a dynamic release of human energy. Out of interest and need comes the powerful drive for self-fulfillment. Anyone who has observed or participated with a child or group of children involved in an enterprise in which they have a consuming interest whether it be learning to ride a bike, producing a puppet show, or solving a secret code has recognized how time and energy extend.

A second factor which supports interest as a source of guidance is that when children's interests are being nurtured, fulfilled, and spread—their human relationships are usually more cooperative and positive. In fact, it is on this basis of common interest and concern that social groups are built and out of the relationships in such groups come social learnings.

A third consideration is that the very nature of children's interests is social. They are interested in themselves and other people—children and adults, the stranger as well as the person of close acquaintance. They want to make friends. They are concerned with the fears, joys, hopes, adventures of people. They are eager to discover the ways people live and work and play. They care about understanding their own bodies and personalities.

The job of discovering, explaining, spreading, and guiding children's interests becomes the creative role of the teacher. Teachers who are sensitive to children know that out of the opportunities that are present in everyday's living are experiences which reveal and extend and deepen children's interests. They know, too, that individuals and groups of children vary widely in their concerns and responses to the new or stimulating experiences provided in their environment.

One group of teachers working with their curriculum leader explored a number of ways of discovering the concerns and interests of their children. A list of the approaches they used may serve to encourage others:

- Observation of children—watching, listening, and studying children's actions, reactions, and interactions in many situations.
- Interviews with children—individually and in groups.
- Group stories in which a teacher or child

began a story and the group of children continued it together or individually.

- Interpretation of pictures.
- A study of bulletin board contributions. One teacher said of this, "The children brought in pictures or clippings from many sources. United Nations pictures led to an interest in countries of the world, their location, and customs, which in turn led to discoveries of the backgrounds of the class members."

- A study of song selections.

Problems and Resources

The world of today is complex and the problems and activities of the peoples of our country and the world are so interrelated that the lives of any and all children are touched by many of them. It is at the place where the problems of our society and the world touch the lives of a particular group of children that teachers make the approach to deepening and broadening understandings that extend into time and distance. Situations that offer opportunities for learning experiences growing out of the culture are inherent in the living of every group of children. The sensitive teacher learns and helps children learn to recognize and discriminate situations, offering these opportunities for dealing with and extending their understandings of themselves and other people.

A few stories will illustrate how teachers are finding guidance for social education in the problems and resources of our world.

It may be as it was with the group of seven-year-olds to which Nancy belonged. Nancy's father was in Japan and Mother and Nancy were preparing to join him. Their planning for the long trip and Daddy's letters and pictures enriched and interpreted by stories and pictures provided by the teacher helped in a very real and friendly way to introduce to these children people who were far away and in many ways different from them.

The news reports had announced, "The governor of Florida is dead!" The group of

eleven-year-olds were asking, "Who will be governor now?" "Why don't we have a lieutenant governor?"—or as one boy put it, "Don't we have a vice-governor?" And so came the direction for one group's first exploration into the governmental organization in their state.

In another sixth grade the issues and concerns in the national election were compared and studied through radio broadcasts and news clippings from different newspapers. It soon became evident that there were differences of opinion and reporting, and the search for reliable information sent teacher and children alike into sources ranging from present news reports to historical accounts of the development of the way we get our president.

Less dramatic perhaps but equally rich opportunities for extending children's understandings of the world and their place in it are ever present in the growing, ongoing changes in the ways we live. The following story illustrates how one teacher who was sensitive to such changes and the interest of her group made use of change in the community.

The dial telephone system was being installed in a small town. The many questions of how and why for such a change became the starting point for an exploration which developed to include among other interests the story of the struggle of the invention of the telephone, telephone courtesy, and the procedures for making a trans-ocean call.

Certainly this specific approach to helping children explore and learn from an interesting development in their community will not be present again in this way. But developments are continuously changing—taking from and adding to the experiences of people in any community setting. The variety of these changes may range from the construction of a new atomic energy plant through such changes as the opening of a new highway, a state or national park, a municipal or military airport, or a new TV or radio station.

Or the developments that are inherent in the "ongoingness" of life in one's



Photo by Marion Perry, University of Fla., Gainesville

On the basis of interests and concern, social groups are built.

community and the world may be given focus in the concerns of a group of children and their teacher through such things as the festival and special-day activities of a community of people—not only the big festivals such as Mardi Gras of New Orleans, Cotton Carnival of Memphis, Rose Festival of Portland but also the small town and village festivals. Hundreds of these across our land celebrate the ways of living and working of people, their products and beliefs. Add to this the varied cooperative work activities still maintained in many small communities. Special cultural groups add their contributions to an interpretation of life—Indian ceremonials, Chinese New Year, folklore festivals.

It is not possible to list all the specific social, economic, and cultural problems and interests which may be meaningful guides to selecting and guiding the social education experiences for children. But it is at this point that the creative and understanding teacher continuously explores with children, providing opportunities that are real in the living to extend children's understanding of the people of their world.

How can we help children understand and deal with the differences in people and their own feelings about these differences? This is one of the more com-

plex problems which parents and teachers face as they guide children's social education. When the feelings and opinions about people's differences are formed without due examination, we call them prejudices. These differences may be in nationality, religion, race. They may also be in economic and social class areas. Sometimes they are between the "new-comer" and the "old-timer," or the city and rural dweller, or the schooled and the unschooled.

At school the differences may be between those who ride the bus and those who walk, or the children who bring their lunch or eat in the cafeteria, or the overage and oversize. Any differences which produce unfriendly and hostile feelings become our concerns.

One approach to this problem which seems to offer promise is that we extend the experiences of children so that the areas of the strange and unknown are continuously becoming the familiar and the known, so that it will not be too surprising:

—to learn that children in China, Germany, and Thailand all play some version of hide-and-go-seek,

—or to discover that the people who are called Moslems do not believe the Christian's Bible but that they do pray to God—Allah—frequently and devoutly,

—or to realize that Dr. Wilson, the Negro dentist in the town, has the same kind of education and does the same work as one's own father.

It is in matters such as these that teachers and parents will have to search most diligently for meaningful firsthand and secondary experiences and then relate and interpret these experiences most sensitively. For it is in this area of problems, more perhaps than any other, that mere subject matter learnings of the geography and history of places and people are not enough.

If we could take our children (even go ourselves) to play and work and talk and sing and dance and eat with the children and adults around the world, surely we could straighten out some of the hostilities between peoples. But this we cannot do. And so we must begin to search for any opportunities which are present.

Now in hundreds of schools we have children and adults from other lands.

Yvette was the little Swiss girl who came, new and strange, to join the third grade. As the children and their teacher took care of making her one of their group they taught her their language and ways in the cafeteria, at play, and at work. As communication became easier she taught them, too, of her experiences and Switzerland became more than a spot on the globe or just another faraway place—for people like them lived there, too.

It was the good fortune of one fourth grade to have a young German teacher work with them and their teacher for a month. What Ludwig said of this experience gives some indication of the gains for him and the children:

"I told the children about me and the children individually told about themselves. . . . Other occasions for getting better acquainted were sitting with children during lunch, playing games, and working together. . . .

"Valentine was new and interesting experience for me. I made a Valentine heart

and showed them how we would do it in Germany. I was very much surprised when I got a lot of Valentine cards on our Valentine party.

"Then the children decided to study Germany. They (and the teacher) worked together and decided problems and questions on Germany. Each committee was going to interview me. The Amusement Committee asked me 32 questions about the kinds of amusement people have over in Germany. After that the committee gave their reports to the total group and presented pictures and other materials.

"Now the pupils had a lot of questions on the topic of the report and they were going to use me again as a kind of resource person. I also was asked to translate for the children their dinner prayer—'God is Great, God is Good. . . .' Now they pray every day in German language.

"I also told this group the German Cradle Song, 'Sleep Baby Sleep' and they are going to teach it to whole class.

"Day before yesterday they saw a filmstrip about points of interest in Germany and I told them some things I knew about the pictures. When they saw pictures of Hamburg, Berlin, and other cities, I mentioned about that many parts of these cities have been destroyed during the last war. They asked, 'By the Russians?' I said, 'Not only by the Russians, by American and English bombers, too.' They said, 'Oh we are very sorry,' and one girl mentioned, 'We Americans must be a bad people.' I said, 'Well, the Americans are not more bad than other people. The Germans have destroyed a lot of beautiful towns, too. You see a war is a bad thing and peace is something we have to work on it.' I think they have been very happy and proud of it when they saw a picture of a very old town, Rothenburg, and when I told them the American High Commissioner of Germany had prevented this beautiful town from bombardment when he was an officer in the American Army.

"I like very much to have personal contact with the children to point out experiences in which American and German children are alike and will like German and American children better and better. Many pupils expressed their wish to see Germany once. Often they asked if I will tell 'that and that' about them to German children.

"On Thursday Carol, one of the girls said to me, 'You have been always very nice to me. I would like to give you a present, what thing do you like best?' I hadn't expected this question and so I answered, 'Nothing at all. There is no reason to give me anything. This is the way I act toward German and also toward American children.' She said, 'Well then I probably will give you a present you don't like.' She gave me some handkerchiefs with my initials. So I don't know what but will hurt a little when I have to leave these children next week. I have discovered the internationality of children.'

The opportunity for firsthand experiences in learning to understand and live well with the differences of people may open as it did with one group which included a child of a Jewish family whose father was high in the religious orders of his faith. The teacher, with the father's counsel, made it possible for Rebecca to explain to the boys and girls some of the customs, services, and materials accepted by her people.

Sometimes the firsthand experiences mean dealing with the problems of unfriendly feelings resulting from differences within one group of children or a neighborhood. Then it may be that the teacher seeks ways other than direct study of the problem to release the tensions of hostility by helping children to find and do interesting jobs cooperatively with those different children. It is not so easy to dislike one when you have accomplished something worthy together.

Some other sources of experiences which teachers are exploring as they attempt to help children learn to understand people and their ways and problems are:

- Using as resource people those who are at hand whose way of life or travel can help them to interpret people or places to children—some grandparent, father, mother, or friend.
- Using the places and things where children may go and see the products of some individual or group's work unknown to them.

• Using the whole range of art forms that interpret the life either of those different from us or of those struggling with a similar problem.

The Teacher Evaluates

Each teacher might well ask a few questions as he looks from time to time in retrospect at the experiences provided for his group of children's social education:

How did the problem arise—get started?
What in the experience was most interesting and real to the children?

What new things did the children add to the experience?

What new things did I add to the experience?
As we *evaluated together* what learnings seemed most important to the children and to the teacher?

What evidences did I have that children were:
—learning to ask and find answers to their questions?
—learning to get along better with each other?
—learning to express their ideas and feelings?

Were there experiences which continuously broadened and deepened children's understanding of other people and places in their state, nation, and the world?

Were there experiences which helped the children to see and appreciate, and when possible help, the people in their families, school, and community?

Whatever the experiences of a teacher and his children may be, the social learnings are unique for each group. But the direction needs to be toward building people who understand and know each other better and who know *how* to care what happens to others.

What Help?

Some books, pamphlets, and bibliographies that explain, interpret, illustrate, and extend this approach to social education:

Books

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA.

—*Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950.
Presents a thoughtful discussion of children's inter-

ests as vital to all their learning—especially helpful for understanding social development. Includes practical suggestions for studying children and providing experiences in terms of their needs and interests.

—*Organizing the Elementary School for Living and Learning*, 1947. Offers help to those who are concerned with planning learning experiences for children based on the problems in everyday living, extending into a wider and wider world.

Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

—Cunningham, Ruth, and Others. *Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls*, 1951. A study of some of the factors affecting children's behavior in groups. Also suggestions to help teachers study their own groups.

—Hilliard, Pauline, *Improving Social Learnings in the Elementary School*, 1954. An analysis of some of the factors affecting children's social learnings. Includes illustrations from the experiences of teachers and children who are working to solve problems that are real to them.

—Miel, Alice, and Others. *Cooperative Procedures in Learning*, 1952. A valuable source of help in "know how" for those who are attempting to use, examine, and improve the use of group processes in their teaching. Contains many examples.

Nesbitt, Marion. *A Public School for Tomorrow*.

Harper, 1953. The story of how one elementary school helps its children learn to live better with themselves, one another, and people from near and far who touch their lives. Rich experiences for social education are drawn from the contents of all areas of man's organized learning.

Standler, Celia Burns, and Martin, William E. *Intergroup Education in Kindergarten-Primary Grades*. Macmillan, 1953. Contains helpful "hows" for teachers and parents concerned with the problems of intergroup education.

Taba, Hilda, Director of Project in Intergroup Education. (American Council on Education). The following three books will be stimulating reading to those who are searching for ways to help children and teachers better understand and improve intergroup relations.

—*Elementary Curriculum in Intergroup Relations*, 1950. Contains descriptive and anecdotal accounts of children and their teachers working on relationship problems and interest in their families, school groups, communities, nation, and the world.

—*With Focus on Human Relations, A Story of an Eighth Grade*, 1950. Helpful for teachers of older children.

—*Intergroup Education in Public Schools*, 1952.

Pamphlets

Association for Childhood Education International.

—*Adventures in Human Relations*, 1948. Collection of anecdotal stories each of which reveals the importance of interpersonal relations in children's social development.

—*Children and TV—Making the Most of It*, 1954. Considers some of the effects of this communications media on children—problem and otherwise—and poses some ideas for its constructive use.

—*Children Can Work Independently*, 1952. Contains everyday suggestions for the teacher who needs

help in organizing and guiding children's individual and small group independent work.

—*Continuous Learning*, 1951. Describes and illustrates continuity in learning that supports the individual and grows out of working on problems that are real to children.

—*Helping Children Grow*, 1951. Contains helpful guides for providing a good school day for children ages two to seven—throughout are provisions for social education.

—*Helping Children Live and Learn*, 1952. Points out the characteristics of good learning experiences through simple statements of principles, illustrative stories, and lists of materials.

—*Helping Children Solve Their Problems*, 1950. Deals with various everyday social learning problems of children. Illustrations from teacher's experiences.

National Conference of Christians and Jews.

—Beauchamp, Mary, Llewellyn, Ardelle, and Worley, Vivienne S. *Building Brotherhood: What Can Elementary Schools Do?* Suggestions are here. Teachers using them can find other ways.

—Grambs, Jean D. *Group Processes in Intergroup Education*.

—Heaton, Margaret M. *Feelings Are Facts*, 1952. Contains ideas and illustrations for helping children understand and deal with feeling of conflict.

National Council for the Social Studies, NEA.

—*Social Studies for Older Children*. Loretta E. Klee, Editor, 1953.

—*Social Studies for Young Children: Kindergarten-Primary Grades*. Mary Willcockson, Editor, 1950.

Both give practical suggestions of experiences and resources.

Science Research Associates, Inc.

—Foster, Constance. *Developing Responsibility in Children*, 1953. Offers in light easy style some responses to the question, "How can we teach children to accept responsibility as a natural part of everyday living?"

List of Children's Books

Taba, Hilda, Director of Project in Intergroup Education. (American Council on Education).

—*Reading Ladders for Human Relations*, (Revised and enlarged edition) 1949. Titles and ideas for using literature to help children solve human relation problems. Some chapters are Patterns of Family Life, Differences Between Generations, How It Feels To Grow Up, and Belonging to Groups.

Association for Childhood Education International.

—*Bibliography of Books for Children*, 1953. Contains listing of books about people of other parts of our country and the world, child relationships, school, community, and world relationships.

Brooklyn College, New York.

—Kenworthy, Leonard S. *Developing World-Minded Children*, 1951. Resources for elementary school teachers.

National Council of Teachers of English.

—*Learning to Live: Basic Relationships of Life*. A Booklist for Supplementary Reading. Selected titles (annotated) organized in such relationship areas as seeking to Understand Your Personal Self, Learning to Live with the Family, and Learning to Live in the World Community.

One of a series of articles from material collected by members of the Make It With and For Children Committee of ACEI, Adele Rudolph (Philadelphia), chairman.

Sixty-five Tambourines!

HOW TO MAKE 65 TAMBOURINES FOR "CONSUMER USE" IN A few weeks—that was the problem that confronted the 11-year-olds. Children from three classes were to dance the tarantella on Play Day and there were only 8 tambourines available. Because our class had been studying Italy, it was natural that we should feel a responsibility for doing the job.

The supervisor of elementary industrial arts suggested that we follow the "assembly line" technique of mass production so that we could make use of the special skill of each person. We listed all the operations involved in making a tambourine and found there were about a dozen. Each applied for the job-group in which he thought he could make a real contribution.

In the "laying-out-and-sawing" group, the workers realized that they were responsible for turning out some 250 identical strips of wood. Using $1/2$ " x 1" basswood, they carefully measured and sawed off an 8" piece. With a mark, they identified this as the "master piece;" it was used throughout the work of measuring and sawing duplicates. The "assembling-and-nailing" group had to be sure that the pieces of wood were put together to form a square, and that the $1\frac{1}{4}$ " #16 brads were long enough so that more than half their length could be driven into the second piece of wood. The brads were "toed" to make a strong "flush" joint. "Nailing-on-the-bottle-top" group found that they had to use $1\frac{1}{4}$ " #15 common nails which were thin enough to go freely through the holes made in each pair of tops and long enough so the free jingling tops would be held securely to the frame during the dance. After painting a few tops by hand, the group "painting-bottle-tops" discovered that it was quicker and easier to dip them. Later, they found it was better not to paint them at all as they "rattled better" unpainted.

Two "supervisors" were selected who, besides inspecting, acted as "conveyor belt." In the mass production of the tambourines, they did find some "seconds." A group was formed to take these apart and salvage the usable parts. Naturally, problems arose and groups changed as various group-jobs were finished.

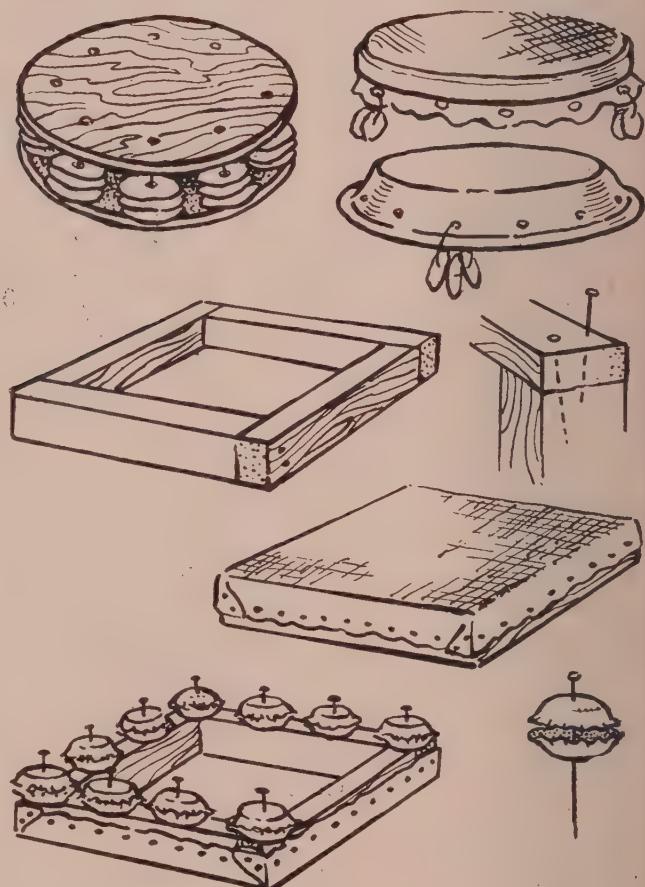
There were pupils who, experimenting on their own, came up

A resource person has many workable ideas.

The children saw a need to set a standard in one "master piece."

Constant evaluation may change the method of working.

with a lovely tambourine made by using a pair of embroidery hoops to which they had tied real Italian coins. One teacher suggested that we use two heavy paper plates, glue them together, punch holes in the sides, and tie on bottle tops. The last 15 instruments were made in this way, painted, and given a coat of shellac. These were quite attractive, less expensive, and almost as effective as the wooden tambourines.



TAMBOURINES: Two 5" circles of $\frac{1}{2}$ " plywood, a pie plate, embroidery hoops or wooden frame covered with a smooth taut covering of skin, parchment, strong flexible plastic, or closely woven cloth with one or two coats of shellac. (Wet both cloth and skin before covering. See: WE MAKE OUR OWN, March 1954.)

FRAME TAMBOURINE: Brads (small round head or "finishing" nails) at joints are "toed" i.e., driven to form a wedge—slightly slanting toward each other but must not meet. Common (large flat head) nails for holding the metal disks in place are driven perpendicularly and at least $\frac{1}{2}$ " into the wood.



Putting the tambourine to use is a real evaluation.

On a recent visit to a manufacturing plant, it was evident that the value of the assembly line technique to industry meant a great deal more to these 11-year-olds now that they had had this experience. Not only have they learned more about tools and materials, but they now know what it takes for individuals to do good teamwork in "mass production" of articles when the standards of the customer play so important a part. The assembly line technique has its place also in production work for such projects as school bazaars and Red Cross work not only because of the superior articles produced but primarily for the social and economic learnings that are there for the 10- to 12-year-olds.

The children were proud and happy to be working not only for each other but also for the other classes. As Arlene said, "On Play Day when I looked around and saw each dancer holding a tambourine and knew that the children and grown-ups were enjoying them, I had a wonderful feeling because I had had a part in making them."

—JEAN GRAHAM, Lamberton School, Philadelphia

Understandings about modern industry grew from work in the classroom.

Personal satisfaction was achieved though work was done on assembly line basis.

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The result of a dozen years of planning and experimentation—Faculty of 15,
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The Basic units from which the sets are comprised consist of corner posts, wall boards and roof triangles, all of which are held in place with bolts and wing nuts; slotted and grooved roof boards complete the structure. The arrangement of these pieces will determine the size and style of the structure. The blocks are made principally from kiln-dried, smoothly finished, unpainted basswood.

To attain maximum play value the dimensions of the blocks have been changed so that maximum size and variety of structures can be achieved at minimum cost.

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Consists of BL 600 and BL 610 and will build a 4' x 8' x 5 1/2' high house.

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Will build a 4' x 4' x 4' high flat roofed house.
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NEW CATALOGUE AVAILABLE

NEWS and REVIEWS

News HERE and THERE . . .

By FRANCES HAMILTON

New ACE Branches

Gaston County Association for Childhood Education,
North Carolina
Walker County Association for Childhood Education,
Texas

New Life Members

Clara A. Eckert, Akron, Ohio
Mrs. H. Lucille Hewston Parker, Cincinnati,
Ohio

Headquarters Fund

Recent contributions have brought the fund for a permanent Headquarters for the Association for Childhood Education International to \$11,475.45.

National Conference on Education

In his message to Congress, President Eisenhower announced his intention "to call a national conference on education, composed of educators and interested citizens, to study the facts about the Nation's educational problems and recommend sensible solutions." It is planned to have state conferences preceding the National Conference on Education.

Action by both Houses of Congress to appropriate funds for the proposed Conference is expected in the near future. During the next two years groups and individuals from every state will cooperate in planning for and participating in conferences in their own states and in Washington.

An Opportunity for Service

Opportunities to teach in the Indian Schools are open to qualified elementary school teachers. Most of the available positions are located in the southwestern part of the United States, although there are some openings in the northwest and southeast. Applicants must have successfully completed a full four year course leading to a degree from an accredited college or university including or supplemented by course work in

elementary education. Further information about these positions may be secured from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

Summer Session Plans

Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts, announces summer opportunities for parents and teachers of nursery school, kindergarten, primary, and intermediate grade children. This summer session, to be held June 28 to August 6, 1954, will be the first in the sixty-five year history of Wheelock College.

Courses will be offered in the study of child growth and development for young people exploring teaching as a profession or facing the problems of parenthood. For experienced teachers, advanced and graduate courses in education and the study of human behavior will be offered.

Educators from Other Countries

During January and February, educators from 11 different countries—Greece, Korea, Norway, Thailand, Iceland, Japan, England, Australia, Holland, Pakistan, and Formosa—visited ACEI Headquarters. They had conferences with ACEI staff members and used the Association's library. There were 17 from Thailand, including teachers, administrators, and a member of the Ministry of Education. These visitors told about education in their countries. Some took ACEI publications, planning to translate parts that would be of special help to teachers in their own countries. Several of these educators will participate in the ACEI Conference in St. Paul in April.

National Council on Elementary Science

The National Council on Elementary Science will hold a one day meeting on Saturday, April 24, following the ACEI Conference in St. Paul. Participants will consider needed research in elementary science. The program will include an address on the subject; a discussion, following observation of a science period in the St. Paul schools; an exhibit of the work of children in the area of science.

Theme: "Effective Education for All Children"
ACEI 1954 Study Conference—St. Paul, Minnesota, April 18-23



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Books for Children . . .

Editor, VERA PETERSEN

MR. REVERE AND I. By Robert Lawson. *Illustrated by the author. Boston: Little, Brown, 34 Beacon St., 1953. Pp. 152, 6 1/4 x 8 1/4 in., \$3.* How can children help enjoying history when persons such as Robert Lawson record it with so much zest and humor?

The author's concern in this book was obviously not to teach history but to present the life and personality of an American he admired. Using an observer's technique in reporting (as he did in *Ben and Me*, Little, Brown, 1939) Robert Lawson let Paul Revere's horse, Scheherezade, do the talking. "Sherry," as he was called for short, gives a remarkable account of the feelings and actions of his master. Sherry, who had once been a mount in the Queen's Own Household Cavalry, sometimes lapses into pro-British thoughts giving young readers something that our history books usually do not—a feeling of what it is like to be on the other side.

The book has the fine coordination of both

story and illustration that comes from Robert Lawson's talent in writing and illustrating.

THE MEXICAN STORY. By May McNeer.

Illustrated by Lynd Ward. New York: Ariel, 101 Fifth Ave., 1953. Pp. 96, 7 3/4 x 10 1/2 in., \$3.95.

An excellent book for fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades! May McNeer has written a meticulously accurate account of Mexico including some geography, a great deal of history, and anthropology of the people. In over thirty chapters (well titled for easy reference) one can read about "The Plumed Serpent," Indian god of plenty and learning; "Moctezuma," a mighty emperor defeated by fear; "Cortez the Conqueror;" "Maximilian;" "Pancho Villa," a bandit who waged a war; "Peace on the Land," modern Mexico; "Mexican Artists;" and "Cuernavaca Market," the plaza where old life meets the new.

This book, of excellent design and format, has been greatly enhanced by the numerous full-color, full-page lithographs by the author's husband, artist Lynd Ward. Teams like this deserve real applause!

(Continued on page 394)

To assure interest in the social studies—

MAN'S WAYS AND TIMES

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This new textbook program on man's changing ways of living throughout the world uses methods and content that appeal to pupils:

- its selection of events from the past throws clear light on the world of today,
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Its books and authors are:

WAYS OF OUR LAND

Clarence Woodrow Sorensen (In preparation)

OLD WAYS AND NEW WAYS, Lewis Paul Todd and Kenneth S. Cooper (In preparation)

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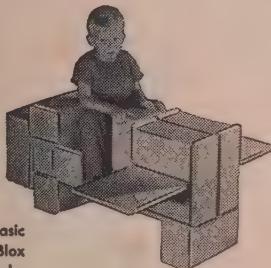
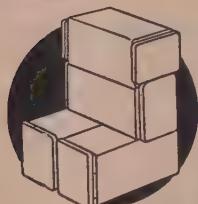
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Books for Children

(Continued from page 392)

Teachers who are not familiar with Spanish might wish for a glossary giving the pronunciation of Spanish words—but others who have acquainted themselves with the colorful culture to our south, will read right along knowing that the Spanish words included convey more meaning than could any substitute for them in English.

BIGGITY BANTAM. By *T. L. McCready, Jr.* Illustrated by *Tasha Tudor*. New York: *Ariel, 101 Fifth Avenue, 1954. Pp. 49, 6 x 7 3/4 in., \$2.50.* Children in the primary grades will be all a-giggle with the rambunctiousness and conceit of Biggity Bantam.

"Biggity Bantam got his name because he earned it. Small as he was, he knew that he was a rooster, all rooster, and he wasn't afraid of any living creature, large or small. He was one of a flock of tiny bantams living in a back yard, close to a Danbury, Connecticut, hat factory. And, no matter what went on among these chickens, he was in the center of trouble."

Thomas L. McCready, in this his first book for children, has done a commendable piece of writing. His story is enhanced with distinctive illustrations, in both color and black and white, by his wife Tasha Tudor McCready.

THE MOON IS SHINING BRIGHT AS DAY.

An Anthology of Good Humored Verse. *Compiled by Ogden Nash. Illustrated by Rose Shirvanian. Philadelphia: Lippincott, E. Washington Sq., 1953. Pp. 167, 5 1/2 x 8 1/4 in., \$3.* Because of our many individual tastes and moods, anthologies of poetry do not easily please us. We look for our favorites. If they are not in a collection we are disappointed. We find selections that do not interest us and wonder why paper was wasted for their printing. All of which adds up to the fact that no one else can make a satisfactory anthology for any of us—each has to make his own. But while we are looking for time to compile our anthologies we can develop an interest in a variety of verse from this wholesome, humorous collection chosen by Ogden Nash.

(Continued on page 396)

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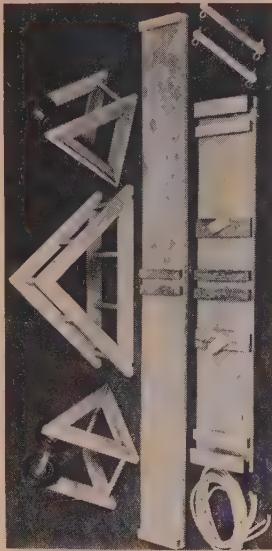
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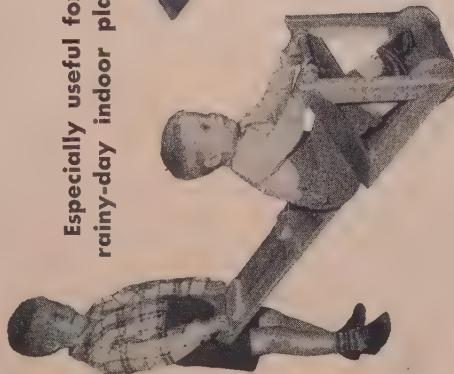
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Books for Children

(Continued from page 394)

The verses are excellent for reading aloud in a family and will especially please children from five to twelve. Verses selected include works of Blake, Coatsworth, De la Mare, Dickinson, Frost, Lear, Sandburg, Teasdale, and many others. Mr. Nash chose verses that he liked as a youngster and added to them those that he and his children had enjoyed together. You are sure to find some old selection you had nearly forgotten and very likely some new ones you will cherish.

BRIGHTY OF THE GRAND CANYON. By Marguerite Henry. Illustrations by Wesley Dennis. Chicago: Rand, McNally, P.O. Box 7600, 1953. Pp. 224, 6 3/4 x 9 1/2 in., \$2.95.

Marguerite Henry, favorite author of young horse lovers, has contributed another excellent story for the pleasure of intermediate and upper grade children.

This time her story is of Brighty, a captivating little burro living in the ruggedness of the Grand Canyon. There is an illusiveness

to Brighty that is intriguing and all the more so when one realizes the story is based on reality.

The author has written with conviction, the artist has collaborated with talent, making this a memorable book.

THE DAY AFTER YESTERDAY. By Phyllis Rowand. Illustrated by the author. Boston:

Little, Brown, 34 Beacon St., 1953. Pp 55,

6 x 9 in., \$2.50. Here is a book that will not appeal to all children, nor to all adults who read to children, but the book is of importance, none the less. Artist Phyllis Rowand has described both in text and drawings the experiences and, even more predominantly, the feelings of an only child from the country who takes a trip "to the biggest city in the world."

It is not a book about which you are apt to feel lukewarm. Either it is of little interest to you or you are completely intrigued and find yourself looking at it over and over again. It is a sophisticated book in both story and illustration, one to delight the unusual child of six to nine.



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**So that parents do more
than just sign the report card . . .**

COUNSELING WITH PARENTS

In Early Childhood Education

by

E. M. LEONARD, D. VAN DEMAN, and L. E. MILES

Here are ways and means of executing a counseling program with parents of kindergarten and elementary school children. In the book, Jane LeRoy, a fictional teacher, describes the way in which she initiates and carries through a program of counseling with the parents of her group. Her straightforward discussions in the first person show vividly the implications of counseling in action. The typical situations presented in this volume illustrate the varying types of problems in human relationships which the teacher encounters: parent-group meetings, individual teacher-parent conference, parent-visits to the school, teachers' reports to parents through conferences and notes, and the exchange of written communications between home and school. All the counseling procedures apply directly to the field of early childhood education but with slight adaptation are applicable throughout the elementary school.

In a special chapter, the authors provide further details and Functional Assignments for those who wish to gain a workable command of various techniques.

To be published in April, 1954

The Macmillan Company

60 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11

Books for Adults . . .

Editors, Dept. of Education
NISTC, DeKalb, Illinois

NEW HOPE FOR THE RETARDED. By

*Morris P. and Miriam Pollock. Boston:
Porter Sargent, 11 Beacon St., 1953.*

Pp. 176. \$4.50. We hear much about adapting training and education to the abilities of children who vary greatly in their capacity to learn. The Pollocks, in this book, show how they have achieved that aim with the mentally retarded children in their private school. As they claim in the preface, they are sharing what they have learned about educational methods in their twenty years of experience with retarded children. They tell *what, how, and why* they teach children of different age levels of varying mental abilities. The many games, songs, activities, and homemade devices are all described in detail and in many cases are illustrated. Their methods are based on sound psychological principles of learning.

The Pollocks contend that mentally re-

tarded children can learn, can enjoy life, and can "amount to something." They show how they have helped many to achieve these aims in life. The sections of the book devoted to explaining to parents the needs of retarded children and the obligations of society to accept them should be encouraging to parents and teachers.

There are numerous references to source materials the Pollocks have found useful (books, games, songs, plays, learning devices) all of which would be helpful to parents and teachers dealing with slow learning children.

—Reviewed by IRENE FELTMAN.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS. By Orin Ross Yost.

New York: Exposition Press, 386 Fourth Ave., 1953. Pp. 165. \$3.50.

Here is a book for the lay reader, presenting the most recent facts and theories of mental illness in non-technical language. The book's readability is such that readers will find it difficult to put down until finished. It presents a picture of the seriousness of the problem; what parents, teachers, and the community can do; and a

(Continued on page 400)

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Books for Adults

(Continued from page 398)

summary of what modern methods of treatment are used when the problem becomes so serious that the patient must submit to professional care.

It is difficult to select salient features, where so much is worth while, but the chapter on alcoholism and its treatment stands out. The last chapter, "Psychiatry and Religion," reveals the growing trend of the two to work together for mental health.—Reviewed by HOMER HALL.

CREATING A GOOD ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING. *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA. Washington, D. C.: 1201-16th St., N.W., 1954.*

Pp. 307. \$3.75. An excellent presentation of practical challenging suggestions for *Creating a Good Environment for Learning*. This first book of its kind that encompasses the entire elementary and secondary school might serve as a refresher course in basic procedures in learning, as well as in the art of good teaching and improving human relations. It is unique in that it brings together principles of good teaching and all the resources—including people—that are needed to facilitate teaching as well as improve learning.

It is written in an easy, conversational style, well-illustrated and captioned, replete with useful, recent, easily accessible references. The analysis of teaching techniques is based on accepted psychological and sociological principles. This book is practical because it presents actual life situations that are filled with everyday problems and their treatment.

The second half of the yearbook is concerned with the many forces that contribute to and constitute a good learning environment, together with an analysis of good teaching techniques.

The bibliography is recent and complete in that it deals with audio-visual materials, books and pamphlets related to the levels treated in the yearbook.

Not only elementary and secondary teachers and prospective teachers will profit by reading this book, but administrators and all others interested in education will be enlightened and each will have a better understanding of his role in education.—Reviewed by MARGUERITE O. O'CONNOR.

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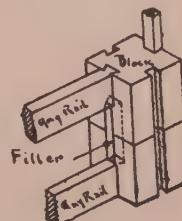
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Films Seen and Liked . . .

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Films

THE GOOD LOSER. *Produced by Young America Films, 18 E. 41st St., New York, N. Y. 1953. B & w, \$62.50. 13 min. Intermediate up.* The story revolves around a boy who, accustomed to winning, finds himself in the role of loser. He has difficulty in accepting his defeat gracefully. The film is splendid for teaching good sportsmanship.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

COLOMBIA—LAND OF MOUNTAIN COFFEE. *Produced by Association Films, 347 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 1952. Color, free loan. 32 min. Intermediate up.* Follows the production of coffee and shows beautiful Colombia from the mountains to the sea. Information about coffee and agriculture, and the work of government agents, schools, and colleges in behalf of the coffee growers.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center.*

AN AIRPLANE TRIP TO MEXICO. *Produced by Encyclopedia Britannica Films, 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 1952. Color, \$100; rent \$4. 10 min. Primary up.* An American mother and her two boys visit a Mexican family. The children are taken by their hosts to see the local spots of interest. A Mexican meal is served in the patio.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center.*

THE STORY OF POTATOES. *Produced by Encyclopedia Britannica Films. 1952. B & w, \$50, rent \$2.50; color \$100, rent \$4. 12 min. Intermediate up.* This film shows the major steps involved in the production of potatoes from the preparation of the seed potatoes for planting until the new crop is sacked and ready for distribution.—*Southwest Film Review Center.*

JAPANESE FISHING VILLAGE. *Produced by Young America Films. 1953. B & w, \$62.50. 14 min. Intermediate up.* This shows an actual day in a Japanese fishing village. Experiences show the family through the day, the father going out on his boat to fish, and the others carrying on the life in the

(Continued on page 404)

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Films Seen and Liked

(Continued from page 402)

village; the return of the fishing fleet and the father coming back to his home. It shows the village carrying on a festival to celebrate a successful fishing expedition.

Narration is spoken by an American-born Japanese, in English.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center*.

YOUR CLEANLINESS. *Produced by Young American Films. 1953. Educational collaborator: Dorothy B. Nyswander, Prof. of Public Health Educ., Univ. of Calif. B & w, \$50. 10 min. Intermediate up.* The film is designed to implement and enrich study-units in health and science education dealing with the establishment of better habits of personal cleanliness. Includes discussion of the importance of cleanliness in health and sickness, and general health rules regarding bathing, care of nails and hair, clean clothing, and teeth.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center*.

Editor's Note: Films reviewed are 16mm sound.

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dren in this field. Provides tested materials for planning a meaningful art program, analyzes the integration of art and general education, and offers many valuable suggestions for art educators.

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Films Seen and Liked

(Continued from page 404)

UNDERSTANDING OUR EARTH: SOIL.

Produced by Coronet Films. 1953. Educational collaborator: Glenn O. Blough, Office of Education. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 10 min. Intermediate up. In an excavation we are shown four layers of soil: topsoil, subsoil, loose rock, and bedrock. Necessity of conservation of topsoil is emphasized by showing long processes of soil formation—weathering and chemical action. Type of soil in various parts of U. S. shown on map.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

Filmstrips

MATERIALS FOR THE TEACHING OF ARITHMETIC. *Produced by Teaching Aids Laboratory, Bureau of Educ. Research, Ohio State Univ. Columbus. 1953. Color, \$3. Silent. 45 frames. Adult.*

The filmstrip shows objects, devices, and games which make possible the firsthand experiences on which arithmetic abstractions must be based. Divided into 3 sections: When Children

Begin; As Number Concepts Become Clearly Established; As Children Make More Mature Applications.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

MUSIC STORIES. *Six filmstrips. Produced by Jam Handy, 2821 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 1953. Color, \$27; \$4.75 each.*

Sound. 29-31 frames. Primary up. Stories which inspired composers to write some of our best-loved music are delightfully told in this series of filmstrips which include: *Peter and the Wolf, Hansel and Gretel, The Nutcracker Suite, Peer Gynt, The Firebird, and The Sorcerer's Apprentice.*

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Over the Editor's Desk

From an Indian School, Tohatchi, New Mexico

Frances Hamilton shared a letter from a friend who teaches in a school for Navajo children, Tohatchi, New Mexico.

"There are over 100 Navajo children attending school here. In the five classrooms they are assigned by age; and that age group includes children who know no English and advanced children.

"I have all gradations you would have in any group of 30. I don't believe anyone could quite conceive all the weak and strong points.

"I believe they have as much latent and expressed talent as any group anywhere. That, of course, is along drawing and music. I even have a few with leanings toward the 3 R's. They are certainly individualists with tremendously good material, but already with a reputation for all that makes a group difficult.

"Twice (immediately following recess) I had to be out of the room and outsiders happened to come in and were surprised to find them all so quietly and purposefully working, all at their own initiated task. Of course that situation doesn't exist all day. They initiate mischief also! To be on the light side—and there is plenty of that—we have a couple of 'massacres' a day. They take justice in their own hands and swiftly.

"I envied the other teachers who could read to their children. So I started out assembling all possible fittings for 'The Three Little Pigs.' But halfway through it was apparent I was reading to myself and I stopped. Later a child asked what a certain page said and I pounced on that, and read to a small group willy-nilly.

"Then somehow the opportunity presented itself—one torn book is pictorially quite appealing—I read 'The Three Little Pigs' to a small group. My most interested and obviously comprehending listener was practically the baby of the class."

Echoes from Last Year's Conference

Last year five educators from Thailand were sponsored by the Office of Education in attending the ACEI Conference in Denver. Their reports showed such enthusiasm that they were shared with us:

"The Denver teachers were very hospitable . . . They took us up the mountain on Sunday morning and we picnicked in a log cabin on one of the peaks of the Rockies. We cooked our own food, pumped our water and cut wood for the fire. We had to melt snow in order to start the water pump and get water to use. What fun we had! I felt as if I were back in my country spending my time in the rural district where we had to rough it. The difference in the situation was that here the mountains were covered with snow, and that we spoke a different language."

"In Thailand we have such conferences on education, too, but most of our teachers like to sit quietly and listen, not wishing to raise problems, share ideas, or solve problems by themselves. They want to be told what to do and how to do it. At the conference of ACEI I learned the method of your teachers working together and solving problems together."

"If the children all over the States are carefully guided by the Association with the co-operation of state branches, how can they help but grow up well prepared to meet problem situations in their future lives? It is worth while to plan such a great work as a study conference. Though the committees were tired to death of their rush manner in working, they now have better understanding with the state branches, and all participants not only enjoyed and profited from the conference but were strengthened and inspired."

Next Month "Learning About and Accepting Ourselves and Others" is the topic for the May CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

To give you many facets of the problem we have invited an outstanding group of people. Their articles present how we can understand ourselves, why it is important, how we can better work with children in this area. Contributors for this issue will be: Franklin McNutt, Woman's College, University of North Carolina; Arthur T. Jersild, Teachers College, Columbia University; Frances Mayfarth, New York University; Libbie B. Bower, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health; Virginia M. Axline, Teachers College, Columbia University; and Hilda Taba, San Francisco State College, California.

The second section will deal with TV by the Oak Lane Country Day School staff.

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